



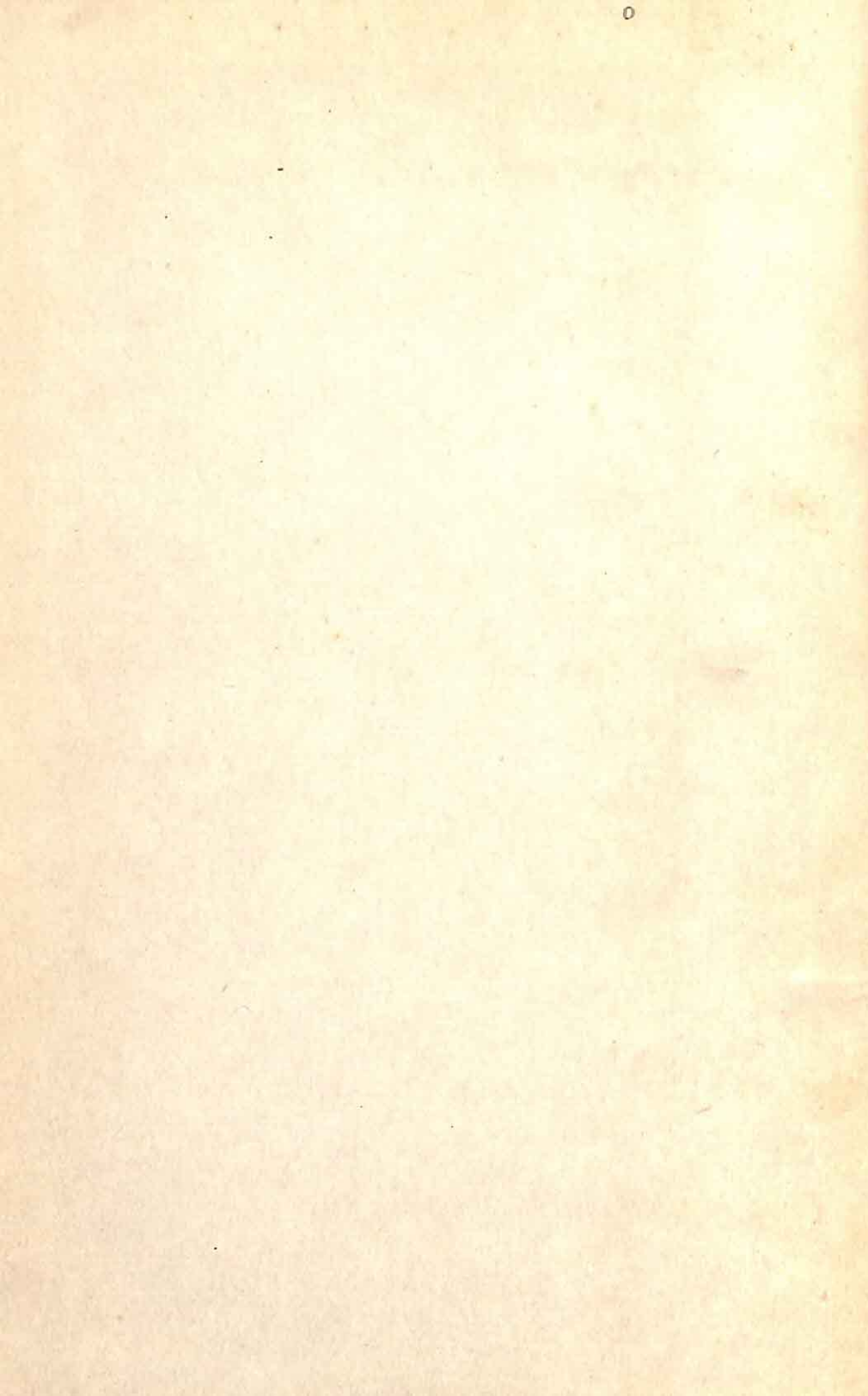




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THE MULTIPURPOSE SCHOOL:  
ITS THEORY AND PRACTICE



# THE MULTIPURPOSE SCHOOL: ITS THEORY AND PRACTICE

by

AUSTIN A. D'SOUZA

and

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## P R E F A C E

THE SETTING up Multipurpose schools is the most significant experiment in the field of Secondary Education in India since Independence. The decision to start such schools was not the brain child of an individual, nor was the Mudaliar Commission its "Onlie begetter". The basic ideas underlying these schools were first mooted by the Hunter Commission (1882) and have, since then been supported by several Commissions during the past half Century. Enlightened theory and practice in many other progressive countries also lends support to our experiment with this type of Secondary school.

If worked out successfully, Multipurpose schools shou'd, *inter alia*, serve the following purposes (a) Establishing our Secondary education on a more rational basis (b) Raising the standards, (academic and otherwise), of our Secondary schools, and of their teachers (c) Decreasing the craze for general education, and reducing the problem of educated unemployed (d) Utilising education to solve the problem of securing adequate manpower with diversified talents, interests, education and training necessary for the success of our Five Year Plans.

Multipurpose schools are potentially of great significance for India. Nevertheless they are being faced with stiff public opposition, and in some quarters there is even talk of abandoning the Multipurpose experiment. Opposition to these schools stems from the following causes (a) Diehard traditionalists and vocal vested interests have ranged themselves against the experiment (b) Lack of scientific knowledge and proper perspective on the part of lay public who pass judgment on educational issues (c) Insufficient realisation and understanding of the rationale of the Multipurpose School Idea (d) Omissions and Commissions in working out the Multipurpose Experiment.

The Multipurpose experiment is undoubtedly a difficult one and is facing serious obstacles, but its abandonment would not only be a retrograde step but a great tragedy. The purpose of

this book is to present a sound basis of theory and to assess the actual practice of Multipurpose schools in this country against a background on the theory, and of the practical working out of the parallel idea in the U.K. and U.S.A. Special efforts have been made to pinpoint deficiencies in practice, and to suggest concrete and practical remedies for mitigating or eradicating them.

The book is addressed to educational administrators, teachers, students of education and the informed lay public. The authors will consider their labours well rewarded if the book helps to develop among them an enlightened and constructive approach to the Theory & Practice of Multipurpose schools in India, leading to a conviction concerning the worthwhile nature of this great experiment and the urgent need to carry it forward to a successful conclusion.

The Authors



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## CHAPTER I

### THE EVOLUTION OF SECONDARY EDUCATION IN INDIA

IT IS ONE of the many paradoxes of the history of Secondary education in India that what we now understand as Secondary education, (both the term itself, and its modern comprehensive connotation), grew up in India not only in isolation from the elementary education of the masses, but, in point of time, before it. It is true that in pre-British times the Hindu Tols and Pathshalas, side by side with the Muslim Maktabas and Madrasahs provided the contemporary equivalent of modern elementary and secondary education but, with the establishment of British rule over the country, these indigenous systems of education rapidly declined, overshadowed and eclipsed as they were by the dazzling lure and the many attractions, economic, social and cultural of the 'New Education' in western science and literature given through the medium of English which took India by storm towards the middle of the 19th century. Accordingly, while this new secondary education for an upper and middle-class elite grew and flourished, elementary education for the masses was not even seriously considered.

This is not surprising if we study the early history of education in England. Education in eighteenth-century England consisted of a system of secondary education provided by the old 'Grammar Schools' and Public Schools, for entry into which the children of the elite were prepared in "Preparatory Schools". Side by side with this fairly well-developed system, the first tentative beginnings were made of a system of elementary education for the masses provided mainly by the Churches, and assisted, after 1833, by local rates and Treasury grants. Disraeli's "two nations" were clearly reflected in the parallel school systems

catering for them. To quote H. C. Dent, "the 20th century idea of secondary education as a stage in education, following upon a primary stage, was actually unknown in England. The Grammar Schools were generally regarded as schools for a different social order from those attending the elementary schools".

This dual system of education in England was transplanted to India, after the Anglicist-Orientalist controversy was finally laid to rest by Macaulay's Minutes in 1833 and Lord Bentinck's Proclamation in 1834 which had pronounced in unequivocal terms in favour of "English Education." This new policy was confirmed by the Court of Directors of the East India Company in their Educational Despatch of 1854. This famous despatch laid the foundation of a national system of education in India, a system which has been confirmed in broad outline by the learned Commissions, which, from time to time, surveyed the Indian educational scene—the Hunter Commission 1882, the Sadler Commission 1904 and the Hartog Commission 1929.

The Sargent Commission of 1944 was the first official body to cast grave doubts on the soundness of the basic psychological and social philosophy underlying the dual system, and to suggest its radical recasting; finally the Mudaliar Commission sounded its death-knell.

Still throughout the 19th and in the early decades of the 20th century, the dual system reigned supreme. Hence it is necessary to look a little more closely into the origins and underlying principles and concepts of what was till recently its most important, and, with all its defects, its most significant part, i.e. secondary education.

The term 'Secondary Education' originated in France, the modern connotation of the term has only recently gained general currency in educational circles, both abroad and in India but the reality represented by it at least partially, dates back to the mid-19th century. The first 'Secondary' school in India was probably the Vidyalaya founded in Calcutta in 1817 by Raja Ram Mohan Roy and David Hare to spread western education through the medium of English among upper-class Hindu boys. The infectious and mounting enthusiasm of the Bengali upper-middle class, social, and intellectual elite for "English Education", and



the growing benefits, social, cultural and economic that began to be attached to it (after it became the accepted policy of the Government to support and encourage this type of education in order to create a class of persons, Indian by race, but Western in outlook and manners, who would be able to man the intermediate and subordinate rungs of the administrative machine, from and through whom, it was piously hoped, Western education would by some mysterious process filter down to the illiterate masses) grew into a ferment with the establishment of the Universities of Calcutta, Bombay and Madras. Hundreds of English or Anglo-Vernacular High Schools were started all over India to prepare pupils for the Matriculation examination of these Universities, degrees from which were the 'open sesame' to much coveted Government jobs, and later to good openings in the developing world of industry and commerce.

This somewhat abnormal birth of India's first modern Secondary Schools — the High English Schools — *de novo* as it were, without any real indigenous roots and without a secure elementary base, coupled with the fact that these schools were meant primarily for a middle class economic and caste-conscious elite, which looked down on the masses and regarded such education (and all the privileges associated with it) as their exclusive birth-right and were in effect 'Preparatory Schools' for the new Universities and thus compelled to purvey a somewhat unreal one-track, literary and bookish education, gave the infant 'secondary' education a peculiar shape and character. This pattern has taken such firm roots both in academic and popular consciousness that it has proved well-nigh impossible to uproot it, and to plant in its 'stead a more progressive and comprehensive view of the real nature and scope of secondary education and, one more suitable for the rapidly growing secondary school population in free India.

Largely because of the peculiar circumstances surrounding its birth and early history, the traditional connotation of the term "Secondary Education", which has held more or less undisputed sway till our own day, was broadly as follows: Secondary education was conceived to be a type of education, distinct from and running parallel to elementary education; the latter was meant to provide the masses with the elements of the 3R's, the



former was for a small social and intellectual, predominantly middle class elite, to prepare them for college and for the professions, and for leadership of the masses destined to be hewers of wood and drawers of water. Since secondary education was specifically and exclusively meant to be College-preparatory, it was unilateral in objective, and accordingly tended to be narrowly conceived, excessively academic and bookish, and out of touch with life; and, as the catchment area widened and the number of children flocking to secondary schools began to rapidly increase with the birth of the 20th Century, it ignored to a greater or less extent, the abilities, aptitudes and vocational ambitions of the majority of children who could not, or did not, wish to go to College, to cater for the few who did.

This one track, University-oriented, academic and bookish type of education was tolerated, and, in the early days of British rule at least, actively encouraged by our foreign rulers because it provided them with a steady and cheap supply of clerks and minor officials needed for the smooth working of the administrative and commercial machine. This idea of a type of education which could be the preserve of a particular class, and which was literary, academic, and divorced from all vulgar contact with life, was peculiarly suited to the temper and outlook of India's budding middle class intelligentsia, and in keeping with the caste-ridden, social structure of Indian society; it became, after Lord Hardinge's Governor-Generalship, the only avenue to much-coveted Government service, or lucrative employment in the expanding world of Commerce. Hence secondary education, despite its obvious growing limitations and defects, acquired a prestige, a glamour and a hold on official and popular consciousness which it only partly deserved on strictly psychological and educational grounds. For while, for the intellectually able, destined for the University and for the learned professions, this type of secondary education provided a more or less suitable, though lopsided and increasingly unreal education, its real and lasting value for the majority of the swelling stream of children who began to flock to secondary schools during the mid-decades of the 20th century, (only a relatively small proportion of whom would go to the University or to the professions), was, to say the least, questionable. And for the below-average and backward, and those



gifted with a practical and aesthetic rather than a verbal intelligence, it was positively harmful.

This inescapable fact became increasingly and painfully obvious to thinking British and Indian educationists, official and non-official, as the numbers in Secondary Schools and Colleges steadily rose year by year, the 'first, fine, careless rapture' for the 'cultural' content of the new secondary education had spent itself, and so far as its economic returns were concerned the law of diminishing returns had begun to operate. The rapidly increasing wastage in the Secondary schools, in which an increasing number of pupils began to fall by the wayside before reaching the matriculation class, the alarming percentage of failures in the matric and degree examinations, the vast number of unemployed matriculates, intermediates and graduates, and the growing frustration and discontent in their ranks which often sought dangerous outlets—these were but symptoms that made it painfully obvious that all was not well in the field of secondary education in India, and that something must be done about it.

It is to the credit of British officialdom that it was the first to realize this fact. It was the Indian Education Commission of 1882, under the chairmanship of Sir William Hunter, that first made a fairly comprehensive survey of the position of secondary schools at the time and drew pointed attention to the many defects and difficulties that had developed in the field of secondary education since Lord Bentinck's Resolution (1834) and the Wood Despatch of 1854. The Hunter Commission pinpointed the basic defects of the secondary education of the day, that it was dominated, cabined, and confined by the entrance requirements of the Universities, and attempted, with disastrous results, to confine within the matriculation strait-jacket vast numbers of pupils who were unfit for this type of secondary education, and who had no intention because of lack of finance or ability, of proceeding for University studies. In brief, the Secondary Schools were sacrificing the needs and interests and vocational ambitions of the majority of their pupils on the altar of University-entrance requirements that they neither needed, nor desired, nor were fitted for. What such pupils needed and desired and were fitted for was not a book-centred but a vocation-centered type of secondary education that would equip them, on



the completion of their secondary studies, to earn a good living and to live a good life.

Hence the Hunter Commission, in view of the fact that an increasing number of pupils in the High schools were not aiming to go to the University, made the then revolutionary proposal that High school education should be regarded not only as a preparation for the University, but be an education, sound, self-sufficient and complete in itself as a preparation for earning a good living. In order to fulfill this dual objective, High schools should be bi-lateral, providing two broad, parallel courses — Course A leading to the University and Course B of a more practical and modern type to equip the youth, on leaving school, for commercial, vocational and non-literary pursuits. And it added the important practical proviso that “when the proposed bifurcation in Secondary schools be carried out, the Certificate of having passed the final standard, or, if necessary, any lower standard of either of the proposed alternative courses be accepted as a general test of fitness for the Public service.”

Had this revolutionary proposal of the Hunter Commission, which anticipated by more than half a Century the diversified pattern of secondary education we are striving to establish in our day, been accepted and implemented it would have changed the face of secondary and higher education in India and have had a tremendous impact on the social, economic and political development of the country. “One wonders,” to quote Sri A. L. Mudaliar from his *Education in India*, “what may have been the future of education in India if these recommendations had been the implemented and the diversified course of instruction suited to the particular aptitudes and talents of the pupils concerned had been instituted and worked out with sympathy and understanding. Nearly 70 years later a similar recommendation has been made by another Commission, when much valuable time has been lost and when opportunities had been ignored to improve not only the standards of the pupils concerned but also the industrial expansion of the country through trained personnel at the various levels of employment.”

Unfortunately this significant recommendation of the Hunter Commission was too far in advance of its time to find ready acceptance, and as a result was virtually still-born. This is

proved by the fact that though the number of High school grew rapidly between 1882 and 1904, yet very few of them actually introduced the second type of vocation-centred secondary course. In 1903-04, 23,000 pupils sat for the University Entrance type of secondary education, but less than 2,000 chose the alternative type, and this number fell steadily in the 20th century till it became a mere trickle, and finally ceased altogether in the early decades of the 20th century.

Largely because of the failure to implement this forward-looking proposal of the Hunter Commission, the chronic defects of secondary education pointed out earlier continued and worsened as the stream of High school pupils grew into a river in the early years of the 20th century. Despite this fact, the proposal of the Sadler Commission in 1904 to restrict the prevalent type of University-Entrance Secondary education to those fit for it, caused a storm of protest as being uneducational, undemocratic and anti-national. The river of High school pupils became a flood with the consequent rapid growth of maladjustments, frustration and discontent among the intelligentsia of the country.

Educational administrators could not close their eyes, however much they tried, to the fact that something was rotten with the state of secondary education, and that only a radical reform and reorganization could root out its many chronic defects and shortcomings, a reform that would embrace both its fundamental aims and objectives, as well as the nature and content of its curricula, its methods, and its length and the duration. Accordingly, during the past three decades the precise objectives nature, content and method, and duration of secondary education have been the subject of more or less continuous debate, even though the descent from the Olympian heights of educational theory to the practical academic field of secondary school practice has not always been as it should be.

The main reason for this lag between theory and practice in the realm of secondary education was the crushing domination of the University over the High Schools which, as the Hartog Commission of 1929 stated, led to "grave defects of organisation" and "great waste and ineffectiveness."



"The whole system of Secondary education," to quote this Commission, "is still dominated by the idea that every boy who enters a secondary school should prepare himself for the University, and the immense number of failures at Matriculation and University examination indicates a great waste. Such attempts as have been made to provide vocational and individual training have had little contact with the educational system and are therefore largely infructuous". "Hence," the Commission added, "all sections of the country with their different ambitions and aptitudes have little if any choice in the type of school to which they will send their children. In fact the present type of high and middle English school has established itself so strongly that other forms of education are opposed or mistrusted, and there is a marked tendency to regard the passage from the lowest primary class to the highest class of a High school as the normal procedure for every pupil. There is nothing corresponding to the exodus from any English Secondary school either into practical life or into vocational instruction."

To combat this strongly entrenched, one-track system, the Hartog Commission revived the by now almost defunct proposal of the Hunter Commission for diversified types of Secondary education, so as, to quote Hampton, "to provide courses suited to the varying needs of the different classes of secondary school pupils who should be prepared for careers in agriculture, commerce and industry as well as the 'white collar professions.' "

Even more noteworthy recommendations of this Commission, perhaps, were that consolidation, concentration and qualitative improvement were more necessary in the field of secondary education than expansion; that the Indian vernaculars should replace English as the medium of instruction in the secondary schools if the quality of the education imparted by them was to be appreciably improved; and that a radical improvement in the quality, status, education and training and emoluments of secondary teachers was a *sine qua non* for any progress in this field. Unfortunately, once again, due to nationalist opposition to the idea of any restriction on the spread of secondary education, and the financial exigencies of the early 30's, the Hartog Commission's valuable recommendations were as much of a dead letter as those of its predecessors.



There was, however, a good deal of activity in the realm of educational theory in the thirties. The Sapru Committee on educational reorganization in the U.P. in 1932 supported the Hartog Commission's recommendation for a diversified type of secondary education, "to make that stage more practical and more complete in itself, and more closely related to the vocational requirements of different types of students", and the Wood & Abbott Report on Vocational Education indicated in some detail some of the many different types of technical, vocational and trade courses that could be provided at the secondary stage of education to cater for the "vocational requirements of different types of students." Growing political unrest, financial stringency, the outbreak of World War II and India's involvement in it against her will, however, intensified the freedom struggle and brought concrete educational progress on all fronts almost to a standstill. But conscious of the fact that Independence was round the corner, and realizing that freedom would be both meaningless and dangerous in the hands of an uneducated populace, the Central Advisory Board of Education, reconstituted in 1933, appointed during the war years a series of expert Committees to examine and report on various aspects of education—primary education, secondary education, teacher training, adult education, etc., and finally a full-scale Commission, under the then Educational Adviser, Sir John Sargent, to draw up an overall plan for the reconstruction of Indian educations after the War.

The C.A.B. Report "Post War Reconstruction in India" (1944) popularly called the Sargent Report, gathered up the findings of its various Sub-Committees, and integrated them into its famous blueprint for the refashioning and reorientation of the entire educational system of the country from the Nursery stage to the University. The Sargent Report, apart from its other attractions, was the first real attempt to lay down the broad outlines of a comprehensive scheme of secondary education of different levels and varieties for the nation's adolescents. This report criticized the limited conception of secondary—or rather what it referred to as 'post-primary'—education prevalent in India, and in its place projected a complete and far-reaching scheme for its reorganization so as to make it better



suited to the abilities and aptitudes not only of the few but of the many. The Sargent Report emphasized that the current type of academic education, aimed at college entrance alone, was not the only type of secondary education possible; nor was it, except for the few, the best type of secondary education. "While it will remain," stated the Report, "a very important function of High (Secondary) schools to pass on their more able pupils to Universities and other institutions of equivalent standard, the large majority of school-leavers should receive an education that will fit them for direct entry into occupations and professions." "A changed outlook of this type," it added a little further on, "will demand a thorough overhaul of the present organisation and curriculum in High schools," and it proceeded to indicate the broad outlines of the reorganized secondary system it envisaged.

The Sargent Report recommended that after a common education at the primary stage (6-11), all children, and not only a selected few, should, on the basis of their abilities, aptitudes, interests and vocational ambitions, proceed to some form of post-Primary (secondary) education, "either to Senior Basic schools, or to one of a variety of secondary courses of five to six years duration which, while being of an essentially cultural character, should be adequately planned for entry into industrial, commercial, and technical occupations as well as to Universities," provided in Bi-lateral (Science-Humanities) High Schools. Besides the Senior Basic and Bi-lateral High schools, the Commission also advocated a third group of "Post-primary" schools, Technical or Commercial Schools which would recruit pupils at thirteen from the other types of secondary schools and provide them with a general education with a strong vocational bias to fit them for direct entry into industry or commerce on leaving school.

This comprehensive and farsighted scheme for the reorganization of secondary education, which, for the first time, clearly acknowledged that secondary education was not a special type of education meant for a selected few, but a normal "post-primary" stage meant for all pupils, and that accordingly it must take diverse forms and shapes to meet the varying needs and abilities of adolescents, marked a significant step forward in the



chequered history of secondary education in our country. But it did not probe deep enough, or reach far enough into all aspects of the many-faceted and deep-rooted problems of secondary education, and the actual system of secondary schools advocated by it exhibited some confusion, overlapping and lacunae. Still, considering everything, and especially the fact that secondary education was only one of the many complicated problems dealt with by the Commission in its Report, the Sargent scheme for the reconstruction of secondary education was a bold, far-sighted, progressive scheme which undoubtedly proved to be of great value and inspiration to the Mudaliar Secondary Education Commission when, (twelve) years later, it set about its task of surveying the entire field of secondary education with a view to suggesting a truly national scheme of secondary education for the country.

In the ten-year interval between the Sargent Report (1944) and the Mudaliar Report (1954) several States attempted to remodel their systems of secondary education along progressive lines. In Uttar Pradesh the Board of High School and Intermediate Education, acting on the recommendations of the Narendra Deva Committee, recast the State system of secondary education, soon after Independence. Henceforth candidates for the High school examination, which marked the completion of Secondary education in the State and largely determined its character and content, instead of being confined to a single type of secondary curricula could choose one of four broad types—Literary, Scientific, Artistic and Constructive. The psychology of postulating four types of adolescents to match the four options is questionable, and the fact that the overwhelming majority of pupils, whether it suited them or not opted for the literary or scientific courses, because of their greater prestige and because they led more easily to the University and to employment, did not make the actual operation of this reorganized scheme of secondary education very successful. Still the U.P. scheme was perhaps the first practical attempt to break new ground and give concrete shape to a new and enlarged conception of the nature and scope of secondary education.

In West Bengal the far-reaching Secondary Education Act 1950, which transferred almost the entire responsibility for

secondary education in the State from the University and the Government to the semi-autonomous Secondary Education Board was also meant to pave the way for the establishment of a new and richer 'unity' in diversity in the field of secondary education.

The act gave the Board a good start by its comprehensive and all-embracing definition of secondary education: "Secondary education means education suitable to the requirement of all pupils who have completed primary education and have not qualified for admission to a certificate, diploma or degree course instituted by a university or by Government, and includes:

- (i) General education;
- (ii) Technical education;
- (iii) Industrial education;
- (iv) Agricultural education;
- (v) Commercial education;
- (vi) Education for the physically handicapped;
- (vii) Education for the mentally retarded and defective;
- (viii) Education in reformatory schools and jails; and
- (ix) Such other types of vocational and special education as State Government may with the concurrence of the Board direct.

Unfortunately, due advantage of the Act's liberal definition of secondary education was not taken by the Board when it drew up its regulations and curricula for the new School Final Examination. The compulsory core of subjects was made excessively heavy, academic, and university-oriented, and the elective element, which was meant to cater for pupils of diverse needs, abilities and aptitudes, was reduced to such minor proportions that the new School Final remained very largely the old Matriculation under a new name, an examination that still imposes on all candidates (a large proportion of whom will not be continuing their education any further) a University-entrance and not a life entrance form of secondary education; one which probably develops fully the ability and aptitudes of a small proportion of the candidates who annually appear for it, but hinders and retards to a greater or less degree, the emotional, intellectual and moral growth and all-round development of the remainder, a fact that it proved, among other



things, by the large percentage of failures (over 60 per cent) annually.

While these and similar tentative experiments towards the diversification of secondary education were being carried out in U. P., West Bengal, Bombay and Madras and one or two other states, the Central Ministry of Education in September 1952, acting on the recommendation of Central Advisory Board of Education, and in response to a fairly widespread demand and a nation-wide need, set up a Secondary Education Commission under the distinguished Chairmanship of Sri A. L. Mudaliar,

- (a) To enquire into and report on the present position of Secondary education in India in all its aspects; and
- (b) Suggest measures for its reorganization and improvement with particular reference to
  - (i) the aims, organization and content of Secondary education;
  - (ii) its relationship to Primary, Basic and Higher education;
  - (iii) the inter-relationship of Secondary schools of different types; and
  - (iv) other allied problems.

Armed with these comprehensive terms of reference the Commission, which included eminent educationists not only from India but also from the U.K. and the U.S.A., set about the difficult task in earnest, and, after touring the country and sounding all shades of public and expert opinion published its Report (popularly called the *Mudaliar Report*) in 1954.

To attempt to summarize the entire *Mudaliar Report* and its comprehensive and far-reaching recommendations in the proverbial nutshell is neither possible nor desirable. The report has its defects—its acceptance of Basic education without a clear definition of it, its half-hearted, unsatisfactory treatment of the vexed and potentially explosive language-problems, and its failure to lay down an all-India 'fair wage' scale for secondary school teachers were especially disappointing—but, on the whole, it provided a comprehensive, courageous and progressive blue print for the future development of secondary education in India.

Certain striking features of the Report, however, merit special attention.



The Commission began by laying down the broad objectives of secondary education in the light of educational needs of free, democratic India, and proceeded to point out, bluntly and unequivocally, in what respects the present system of secondary education falls short in its ability to achieve these enlightened objectives.

The main defects of the prevailing type of secondary education were brilliantly diagnosed—it was found to be narrowly conceived, laying too much emphasis on bookish knowledge, overcrowded with insignificant details, insufficiently adapted to individual differences, dominated by examinations, lacking in provision for technical and vocational studies, and out of tune with life, failing to prepare students for life or giving them a real understanding and insight into the world outside schools into which they would presently have to enter.

To remedy these deep-rooted defects, the Commission suggested a radical re-orientation and re-modelling of the existing system and a new organizational pattern of the entire educational system in India. The overall structural pattern was briefly as follows—an 8-year period from 6-14 of integrated elementary (Basic) education for all children, followed by a 4-year period of secondary education for those who had the necessary ability and aptitude, which, while containing a common core for all the students, would also provide diversified elective courses to cater for the student's different abilities and aptitudes, either in the existing High schools, suitably modified and upgraded into Higher Secondary schools, or, better still, in Multipurpose Higher Secondary schools which would provide the various optional courses in the same school. The aim of these diversified courses—Humanities, Scientific, Technical, Commercial, Agricultural, Home Science and Fine arts—the Commission stressed was not narrowly vocational, "the objective is to give an all round training in the use of tools, materials and processes which are mainly responsible for turning the wheels of civilisation. They are not intended to produce artisans". The Secondary Education Commission went on to deal with many other matters in connection with secondary education—its administration, the training of teachers for secondary schools, the need for educational and vocational guidance, new types of examination and evaluation in



the Secondary schools—but its main claim to remembrance will probably rest on the new, rich, dynamic and diversified pattern of secondary education it so convincingly advocated, and on its clear-sighted realization that “the most important factor in the attempted educational reconstruction suggested by us, is the teacher, his personal qualities, his professional training, and the place he occupies in the school and the community at large.”

The Secondary Education Commission Report was very well received, and what is more important, acted on. Top level discussions and consultation concerning the implementation of the Report took place among the Central Government, State Governments, the Universities and Boards of Secondary Education, and general agreements hammered out in respect of both the aims and objectives, and the nature and content and pattern of secondary education. Under a project sponsored by the Central Government and the Ford Foundation, a select team of Indian and foreign experts, after an on-the-spot study of the Secondary Education systems of England, Denmark and the U.S.A., supported the main recommendations of the Commission, and suggested a system of priorities for their rapid implementation. Regional Seminars of Headmasters, Inspectors and other educational officers, sponsored by the Central Ministry of Education in cooperation with State Governments, by and large welcomed the main recommendations of the Commission with enthusiasm, as did also the influential Central Advisory Board of Education and Committees of Vice-Chancellors and Secretaries of Boards of Secondary Education. Further, the Central Ministry of Education, in cooperation with the Ford Foundation, set up an All-India Council of Secondary Education to stimulate and guide the progress of reorganization in the field of Secondary education towards the achievement of the ideal and objectives of the Secondary Education Commission Report. In 1955, as a climax and summing up of all these endeavours, the Central Ministry published. “Plan for Secondary Education” which set forth that the eventual pattern of Secondary education in the country should be as follows: (a) Eight years of integrated elementary (Basic) education. (b) Three or four years of secondary education where there will be diversification of courses. Finally, driven to a sense of urgency by the con-



census of enlightened educational opinion in the country, the Planning Commission accepted the new pattern of secondary education and provided substantial funds for the conversion of High schools into Multilateral or Multipurpose Higher Secondary schools during the last two years of the First Five Year Plan, which would provide diversified types of secondary education to students of varying needs and abilities along the progressive lines suggested by the Mudaliar Commission.

The movement towards the upgrading, repatterning and diversification of Secondary Education was considerably speeded up during the Second Five Year Plan, and up to date thousands of High schools have been upgraded into single stream Higher Secondary schools and over a Thousand High schools have been converted into Multipurpose Higher Secondary schools. More recently there has been a stress on consolidation and improvement of the quality of existing Multipurpose schools, and the latest plan is to establish Model multipurpose schools on a regional basis which will be generously staffed and equipped so as to serve as a model and inspiration to other Multipurpose and Higher Secondary schools in the area.

The mere acceptance of the 'new secondary education' by progressive educational planners and administrators at the Centre and the States, and the setting up of large numbers of Higher Secondary and Multipurpose schools throughout India, will not, however, of itself produce the required revolution in this important field of education which marks the final stage in the education of millions of adolescents, lays a solid basis for the higher education of others, educates the teachers who will make or mar the elementary schools, and, to quote Prof. H. Kabir, "on the one hand train up the large body of intermediate leaders who are needed for the effective functioning of the State, and on the other help to select the smaller band of higher leadership to guide its overall policies." Despite the enthusiasm which the new pattern of Secondary education has generally created among administrators and teachers all over the country, there still is, and is bound to continue to be, a considerable lag between progressive theory and actual practice, especially as the existing 10-year High schools and new 11-year High Schools are bound to exist side by side for a considerable period in the



foreseeable future because of the lack of funds needed to convert all High schools into Higher Secondary schools. The traditional conception of one-track, College-preparatory secondary education is deeply entrenched, and the combined forces of blind worship of tradition, inertia and vested interests are fighting a delaying, rearguard action to keep it so. The existing lag between theory and practice in the realm of Secondary education will thus continue for some time, and many practical and ideological difficulties and obstacles, which will be discussed in later chapters, will have to be overcome before the Mudaliar Commission plan for a comprehensive, Multipurpose pattern of secondary education for all Indian adolescents becomes a reality.

As we proceed in the Chapters that follow to attempt to isolate, define and analyse the many implications—ideological, administrative, socio-economic and educational—of this Multipurpose Idea in theory and practice, the various difficulties of implementation may seem insurmountable and the problems insoluble. But, fortunately, we do not have to start from scratch, for we can draw on the combined experience of other countries like the U.S.A., the U.K. and the Scandinavian countries which have already charted out much of the road ahead and pointed out its worst dangers. Given the faith, the courage, and the intelligence to experiment boldly ourselves, and to learn from such progressive countries as have already embarked on similar far-reaching schemes for reorganizing and refashioning their systems of secondary education, there is no reason for undue pessimism. The full realization of the "Multipurpose Idea" in theory and practice may not be round the corner, but with the Mudaliar Commission Report, the Central Advisory Board of Education, the Planning Commission, the National Council of Education and Research, the new planning and development departments of the State Governments, the modern Research Institutes set up by the Directorate of Secondary Education (formerly the A.I.C.S.E.), and the Extension Service Departments and Training Colleges to light the way of administrators, heads, teachers and parents, and of the people at large, some advance can be made towards this realization in our life time.

## CHAPTER II

### THE MULTIPURPOSE IDEA

"THE term Multipurpose School", says Dr. Henry Harap, a T. C. M. educational expert who acted as an adviser to the Central Bureau of Text Book Research, in his stimulating and practical pamphlet, *Improvement of Curriculum in Indian Schools*, "stands for an idea rather than for a common practice, at least in the literal sense of the word." In the last chapter we traced the evolution of modern secondary education in India from its birth in the 19th century to its present position, and showed how the concept of secondary education gradually shed its limited, unilateral character and widened into the comprehensive, multilateral, diversified pattern which it is slowly but surely assuming today.

In this chapter we will endeavour to examine, a little more in detail and in depth, the rationale of the "Multipurpose Idea", and its many implications and bases — psychological, educational, social, political, economic, and moral and spiritual, to assess how far it is justifiable in theory, and to what extent it is capable of realization in actual practice. Such an examination is essential at the present moment when the Multipurpose Idea, having largely overcome the early opposition to it, is in danger of becoming a slogan, and when large numbers of so-called Multipurpose Schools have been, are being, and will be established all over the country. The foundation of these schools and the widespread acceptance of the Multipurpose pattern of diversified secondary education in India has temporarily driven away the "darkness at noon" that had enveloped the field of secondary education in the last decades of the 19th and early decades of the 20th century, and given it a fresh inspiration and lease of life. Indeed, the dawn of a new era in the field of secondary education appears to be in sight. But it must never be forgotten that action and reaction, even in the



field of education, tend to equal each other, and the greater the hopes that have been aroused, the greater will be the disillusionment if these hopes are not substantially realized. A great educational experiment like the Multipurpose School experiment (and it must never be forgotten that it is an experiment, and not, as many wishful thinkers and educational administrators seem to imply, an accomplished fact) can only succeed if it is founded on a sound bedrock of educational theory, and if the attempt to translate the theory into practice is carefully, systematically, objectively and fearlessly evaluated from time to time.

In this chapter, and in some of the succeeding chapters, an attempt will be made to expose and to critically examine the corpus of theory of which the Multipurpose School idea is the final expressions, to assess its relative strengths and weaknesses and, to evaluate whether, and to what extent, the idea is being worked out in practice along the right lines.

This evaluation of the practical working out of the Multipurpose idea will be dealt with in much greater detail in Chapters IX and X. Accordingly the main focus of this chapter will be on the Multipurpose Idea in theory, as it has evolved, and is being still evolved, not only in India but in other progressive countries like the U.K. and the U.S.A.

The political, socio-economic and moral upheaval caused by two world wars within our lifetime has brought about tremendous changes in every country of the world, and, realizing that the "good old days" can never return, every country is planning the Brave New World of the future. While politicians, economists, and planners of all kinds have framed their blueprints to usher in the millenium, yet deeper thinkers are slowly but surely being forced to realize that the 'new world' of these dreams cannot be brought about overnight, but only by a long, laborious process of education of the right type. Hence countries all over the world, both the older ones like the U.K., and those which, like India, have recently won the freedom to decide their own destiny, are re-evaluating their educational ideals and objectives at all stages of the complex and continuous educational process which stretches from the cradle to the grave, and endeavouring to set their educational houses in order so that the new world they dream about may be based on secure and lasting foundations.



This deep, universal heart-searching in the field of education was crystallised in our day in the growth of a much fuller realization of education in its widest connotation, and a clear realization of its cardinal importance in the life both of the individual and of the nation as a whole. Education, as a consequence, is no longer equated with 'instruction in the elements of the 3R's' or "information mongering", nor is it thought to begin and end with the child's period of formal schooling, extending in different countries over eight, ten or twelve years. Education today is identified with the total complex of influences, which impinge upon the individual from birth to death, in the home, in the school, and in the community, local and national; it is broadly defined as the entire process of assisting an individual to grow to full maturity, physically, intellectually, morally and spiritually, through, and to a large extent for, the society in which he lives, and moves, and has his being.

It is further acknowledged today that every child, irrespective of caste, nationality, or the financial or social status of his parents has the right to an education capable of developing his many-faceted personality to the fullest possible extent. Under the impact of this democratic ideal, the dual system of education current in most countries, a banquet of preparatory, secondary and higher education for the élite, and the crumbs of elementary education for the masses, is giving place to a 'Common School' system. The educational ladder leading from the elementary to the secondary system of education is being replaced by a broad educational highway along which all children will have the opportunity to advance to individual and social fulfilment and efficiency. The educational structure, which, in the past reflected and propped up a caste and class-driven society is thus being democratized and transformed to meet the pressing claims of social justice and equality, and the needs and values of the modern Welfare State. Education in all its fullness, as a result, is today no longer regarded as the privilege and preserve of the few born to it, or who can pay for it, but as the birthright of all; and the rather restricted notion of the 3R's has given place to the much more enlightened conception of education according to the 3A's — age, ability and aptitude. A natural complement of the 3A formula is the concept of education as being co-terminous with life, a continuous,

never-ending process of growth and development from the cradle to the grave, comprising three broad stages elementary, secondary and further education.

Free, universal, compulsory elementary education is both an article of faith and a reality in the progressive countries of the world, and even developing countries like India have pledged themselves to make it a reality in the shortest possible time. There is still in some countries a narrow identification of elementary education with instruction in the elements of reading, writing and arithmetic, or with mass instruction, as opposed to the education of the elite. But the battles to free elementary education from its class origins and to secure a more liberal interpretation of its scope and function have been largely fought and won. Hence we find a fairly general consensus of agreement that elementary education is not a type of education meant for a particular class "the working class," whose members are to be taught their place in society, but as the first stage in the education of all children, aiming to promote their all-round development in body, mind and spirit; that while its primary function is to lay a sound foundation for the later stages of education — secondary and further education — it must not be regarded as mere preparatory stage for the former, but must develop a life and individuality of its own. The ultimate objectives of elementary education, whether of the basic or non-basic variety, have been widened far beyond the normal aim of imparting literacy, their all embracing nature has been well summed up by Mr. H. G. Stead as "to safeguard the physical development of the growing child to stimulate and exercise his senses to equip him with the fundamental knowledge he will need in later years to provide such a field of activity for him, physical and mental that he will come to the next stage of education so equipped, physically, mentally and morally that he will be able to profit from it. This is not to say that his work in the elementary school is merely preparatory, for it is only so far as the child lives completely in his elementary school years that he will really be prepared for the Secondary School ones."

The battles in the field of elementary education have been largely fought and won. There is almost universal agreement as to the true nature and scope of elementary education, and its

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necessity for all children. But when we turn to the field of secondary education a different picture emerges, and one has the feeling that the battles have just begun. Elementary education for all children is a good beginning, but it is only a beginning of the long process of education that commences with birth and will end only with death. If a child's education ends with it at the age of 13 or 14, it will be like laying the foundations of a house and stopping there, for who would dare to say that a child is prepared for life in the complex and ever changing world in which we live if his formal education ends at 14 — the most critical and dangerous period of his life? Hence in the European countries, in the U.S.A., Australia, Canada, New Zealand where free, universal, compulsory elementary education is a reality, secondary education for all is realized to be the natural corollary of elementary education for all. And even countries like ours, where elementary education is still far from being universal, have begun to look forward and plan for its inevitable aftermath, and to dream in terms of secondary education for all.

Though it seems obvious that in countries that can afford it, secondary education should follow elementary education as a matter of course for all children, irrespective of caste, creed, or the social or financial standing of their parents, yet, like all truisms, it is so obvious that it was overlooked till comparatively recently. Indeed, the growing acceptance in our day of the democratic ideals of universality and equality of educational opportunity, with their natural correlative not only elementary but also secondary education for all, marks a staggering revolution in the contemporary field of education.

The true character, significance and extent of this revolution, and its historical origins and growth, merit fuller exploration. It is a revolution, quantitatively and qualitatively, in kind and degree, and this revolution inside the educational world is the reflection and result of a wider and more far-reaching political, economic, social and moral revolution in the wider world outside, for, as Sir Michael Sadler pointed out, "the things that happen outside the schools matter even more than the things inside the school, and govern and interpret the things inside it." In some cases the revolution was a "Silent Social Revolution" as in England; in others it took a more violent and radical form as in



the U.S.S.R. But the net result of the impact of the wider revolution in the field of education, and more specially secondary education, was the same. In all countries the slogan of "Equality of Educational Opportunity for All" was raised. Combined with it the demand for Common School or *L'Ecole Unique*, with a common base in the elementary school and secondary education for all, according to ability and aptitude, became the rallying cry of all those progressive forces that pressed for a truly democratic system of education, reflecting and satisfying the needs and compulsions of modern social democracies in action.

A great complex of political, economic, social and moral forces underlay and gave birth to these slogans, and the educational ideals they embody.

In the field of education, as in other spheres, the satisfaction of some wants creates other wants. The masses given at first a minimum pabulum, and later a more enriched diet of elementary education, began, like *Oliver Twist*, to "ask for more.". Their leaders in Labour and Trade Unions, realizing the need for a better educated rank and file, encouraged this demand, and, being a political force to be reckoned with, were able to wring concession after concession out from the traditional, privileged ruling class elite. Their demand for education beyond the elementary stage for the masses gained support from the Industrial Revolution, and the rapidly changing character of industry which required better educated and trained workers, and as, due to the increasing improvement of machines, working hours became shorter, there arose the added necessity of educating the masses not only for work but also for leisure.

The two World Wars, both of which were fought for the preservation of the democratic way of life, gave an added impetus to measures designed to democratize the existing system of education. Since all citizens shared equally in the sacrifices entailed by war, it was felt to be only just that all should be given equal opportunities in the post-war world in the field of education. Finally the gradual evolution of a new psychology of education which shifted the emphasis from subjects to the child, both as an individual and a member of society, and the birth of a new social philosophy of the Welfare State and a classless society, led to realization that an extended period both of in-school and



further education was essential for all children if they were to develop their fullest potentialities, intellectual, mental, moral and spiritual, and be prepared to become functional and effective members of a classless society.

These, and allied socio-economic forces had profound and far-reaching repercussions, both on the structure of society and on the educational structure which is always closely tied to it. In the 19th century a dual or multiple system of education was designed to stabilize and perpetuate a class or caste structure of society. The notion that equality of educational opportunity for all, taken for granted in the U.S.A. since the days of President Jackson, was a primary requisite for a true democracy involved serious educational implications; it was realized that, besides elementary education, secondary education was also the birth-right of all children. This ideal of "Secondary education for all," easy to accept in theory, however created a host of practical problems when attempts were made to give it "a local habitation and a name."

Elementary education for all is a comparatively easy task as all children till they reach puberty have fairly common and well defined needs and interests which are best satisfied in a common elementary school. But with the dawn of adolescence, their interests and abilities begin to be different; differences of intelligence of aptitudes, and of vocational goals and ambitions appear for which provision has to be made at the secondary level of education. The attempt to cater for these individual differences, as well as for common needs and interests, since all children have to be prepared to be good citizens in a complex, ever-changing world in addition to being prepared for specific vocations, is now taken for granted. In our modern age the concept of a pre-ordained, unchangeable, stratified social and educational structure is regarded by most thinking people all over the world as out of tune with the modern ideal of a social democracy and Welfare State, the only difference of opinion being as to the rate and extent of the change from the former to the latter.

The more constructive group of reformers are of the opinion that any radical upsetting of the present socio-educational structure would be dangerous, and advocate that it be made less rigid by the acceleration of social and educational mobility between

the various strata of society and the different types of schools, elementary and secondary, that cater for them.

This half-way solution is not radical enough for the second group of reformers who hold that the ideals of a Welfare State and classless society can only be realized by a revolution, which, in the educational sphere, implies a common system of elementary-cum-secondary-cum-further-education in place of the present stratified school system. This view found clear expression in the famous manifesto of the British Labour Party in 1921 which stated unequivocally:

“The only policy which is at once educationally suited to a democratic country is one under which primary education and secondary education are two stages in a continuous process so that all children, irrespective of means, class, or occupation may be transferred from the primary or preparatory school to one or the other of Secondary schools.”

The gradual acceptance of this simple obvious but nevertheless revolutionary idea led almost inevitably to a new conception of the nature and scope of secondary education, and to a rethinking of the proposed objectives, content, methods, and, above all, the organization of secondary education in terms of the new aims, standards and values inherent in this new conception of it. The fruits of this re-thinking became obvious in the thirties and forties of our century.

This new mid-20th century conception of secondary education is different both in kind and degree from the traditional 19th-century conception. Secondary education as a normal stage in the education of all adolescents, according to their varying needs, abilities, aptitudes and vocational ambitions, could no longer remain unilateral, meant only to prepare the few for College; it had to become multilateral, to prepare the many, who did not intend to go to College, for their different vocations. Hence the Hadow Commission emphasized: “Secondary education should as far as possible be regarded as a single whole within which there will be a variety of types of education which would be generally controlled by the common aim of providing for the needs of children who are entering and passing through the stage of adolescence”. Using the needs of children who are entering and



passing through the stage of adolescence as the touchstone, the fundamental objectives of secondary education have been defined as two-fold, to provide a preparation for good citizenship in the modern world, and to cater for the special interests and individual differences between adolescents by means of a curriculum and a life best calculated to this end.

Both these objectives, which are intimately interrelated, aim to help adolescents to mature gracefully into young men and young women who are capable of being good citizens of their respective countries, good workers in their respective avocations, and good men and women. The modern conception of the scope and aims of secondary education in all its fullness has been aptly summed up by Professor H. C. Dent in his stimulating book *Secondary Education for All*. "To me" says Prof. Dent, "secondary education is that stage of education necessary for all children expecting to become full members of a complex modern society which, building on a secure foundation of primary education, attempts by providing for the adolescents a satisfying school life, and by developing to their highest potential his ability, his healthy aptitudes, interests, and qualities of character to bring him to the threshold of adult life adequately prepared to enter upon that life as a knowledgeable, active-minded and sociable individual, a citizen aware of his privileges, rights, duties and objectives as a member of a democratic society, and eager to take them all up, and a worker sufficiently skilled to begin not only to support an individual life of his own but to make a reasonable continuation through his work to the natural and spiritual wealth of the community, and to know why he should do so and be satisfied with the reasons." Prof. Dent's comprehensive "terms of reference" for Secondary education, while broadly applicable to Indian needs and conditions, needs some difference of emphasis to meet the specific needs and ideals of our country, both as it is at present, and in the light of the new social order that we envisage for the future to which education in general, and secondary education in particular, must be geared.

In making this adaptation to India's special needs and conditions and defining the specific aims and functions of the new secondary education in India, we cannot do better than follow the wise lead of the Mudaliar Commission. The Commission



defined the aims of secondary education in the new India to be "the training of character to fit students to participate creatively in the emerging social order, the improvement of their practical and vocational efficiency for the prosperity of the country, and the development of their literary artistic and cultural interests which are necessary for self-expression and for the full development of the human personality without which a living national culture cannot come into being".

In order to achieve these comprehensive ends the traditional Secondary school curriculum, which is narrowly conceived, excessively bookish and subject-centered, lacking in significance, dominated by university matriculation requirements, ill adapted to individual differences, needs and capacities, and lacking in vocational technical and aesthetic content, needs to be radically transformed and considerably widened and deepened. The precise details of such a curriculum will be dealt with in a later chapter. Here it is only necessary, to emphasize that the curriculum must have a dual objective for all pupils; it should inculcate those basic ideas, aptitudes and appreciations which are essential for playing the role of intelligent citizens in a democracy, and also have sufficient variety and elasticity to cater for their individual differences, needs, interests, aptitudes and abilities. To attain this two-fold objective in all its fullness, the expression "school curriculum," while giving due importance to the traditional subjects, must be extended, in the words of the Mudaliar Commission, "to include the totality of, experiences that a pupil receives through the manifold activities that go on the school, in the classrooms, library, laboratory, workshop, playgrounds and in the numerous informal contacts between teachers and pupils. In this sense the whole life of the school becomes the curriculum which can touch the life of the students at all points and help in the evolution of a balanced personality."

Even a perfectly devised curriculum will remain dead unless quickened into life by the right methods of teaching and the right teachers, and unless more dynamic methods of teaching than the traditional formal methods are used in the secondary schools of today, it is obvious that they will not achieve in the fullest measure their wide objectives. These important matters will be dealt with in detail in later chapters.



There is fairly general agreement, both in India and in progressive countries abroad, concerning the aims, purposes, curricula, methods of teaching and types of teachers needed to make the new secondary education for all a success.

The main problem that still remains to be solved, and which has caused considerable and heated discussion and debate in progressive educational circles in the U.K., U.S.A. and the advanced Continental countries, and, to a less extent, in India, is an administrative one. What type of organization will best enable educationists to give a local habitation and a name to the new secondary education? Should the different types of secondary education, which are necessary to cater for the different abilities, aptitudes, interests and vocational ambitions of adolescent boys and girls, be given in several different, unilateral institutions, each specializing in one variety of secondary education, or should they be given in one Common School, designated variously as a Comprehensive, Multilateral, Omnibus or Multipurpose School?

The answer to this key organizational dilemma differs from country to country, depending on their political, social and economic history, but certain common trends are noticeable in all progressive countries that are striving, with different degrees of success, to be truly democratic.

In the U.S.A., where the democratic ideal of secondary education for all American youth has perhaps been carried furthest, the traditional pattern of organization of the Public High School is the co-educational, Comprehensive High School, offering both general and vocational education of all kinds to all boys and girls of the community over the age of 12, and endeavouring, with varying degrees of success, to offer to each and every boy and girl a type of secondary education tailored to his individual needs, abilities, aptitudes and vocational ambitions. This community-centered, Comprehensive Public High School, despite serious defects and weaknesses, which have been highlighted in the recent post-sputnik agonizing reappraisal of American Secondary and Higher education, is still the most typical and popular type of High School in the U.S.A. But there is a noticeable and gradually growing trend in large cities to provide a variety of small specialized High School, (each catering for a distinct type of secondary edu-

cation), in the place of, or in addition to, the standard large, Comprehensive High Schools.

In England the traditional pattern has been to provide post-primary and secondary education in three types of Secondary schools, Grammar schools, Technical schools and Modern schools. This tripartite, segregationist pattern of school organization, and the selection at 11 plus which decides to which type of secondary school a boy or girl will be sent is increasingly under attack on social, psychological and educational grounds and many Local Education Authorities, notably London, Manchester and Coventry, are experimenting on a large scale with bi-lateral, Multilateral or Comprehensive schools that cater for all children "though a system based on a central core of subjects common to all from which branch classes in specialised subjects according to the desires, aptitudes and capacities of children." While the official policy of the Ministry is perhaps biased in favour of the tripartite system, it nevertheless encourages both patterns of organization; in fact its answer to the hotly debated question: "Three Schools or One?" is, in the typical British tradition of caution and compromise, that both types or organization have their advantages and disadvantages, and that whereas in one set of circumstances different types of secondary schools will best solve the problem of providing secondary education for all, in another Comprehensive Schools would appear to be the answer, and in a third a combination of both.

In Scotland, while different types of Secondary schools are found, yet official opinion and educational tradition in contrast to those of England, tend to lean in favour of what the Scottish call 'Omnibus Schools' on the grounds that, in the words of the Report of the Advisory Council for Education in Scotland on Secondary education, "this is the natural way for a democracy to order the post-primary education of a given area, that it escapes many of the disadvantages of other form of organization, that it mitigates, though it does not wholly solve, the vexatious problems of selecting and grading and that, better than any other plan, it promotes the success of the school as a community."

The trend towards the Multilateral or Comprehensive high school, as a substitute for, or a supplement to the separate types of secondary school which have grown up in many countries, is also



clearly visible in the Scandinavian countries notably Sweden, and in Commonwealth countries like Canada, whose school system is largely modelled on that of the U.S.A., and New Zealand. In fact, though one would expect otherwise, the only major country that still sticks to the traditional historical pattern of separate High Schools for different types of pupils is the U.S.S.R.

In India, the Secondary Education Commission, when deciding upon the pattern of organization that would best promote the new secondary education it visualized, threw its weight in favour of what it termed the "Multipurpose school". "Our Secondary school," said the Commission, "should no longer be single-track but should offer a diversity of educational programmes calculated to meet the varying aptitudes, interests and talents which come into prominence at the end of the period of compulsory education. They should provide more comprehensive courses which will include both general and vocational subjects and pupils should have the opportunity of choosing according to needs".

Such "comprehensive courses," the Commission felt, could perhaps best be provided in a Multipurpose school which "seeks to provide varied types of courses to students of diverse aims, interests and abilities. It endeavours to provide for each individual pupil suitable opportunity to use and develop his natural aptitudes and interests in the special course of studies chosen by him". While advocating the starting of Multipurpose schools, the Mudaliar Commission, however, emphasized that "it is not our intention that all should be of the same type. There will be room also for unilateral schools where intensive training will be provided in particular types of vocational courses according to the occupational needs of the community and locality." This important caution should not be lost sight of in our zeal for making a success of the Multipurpose experiment.

The modern trend, therefore, in the field of secondary school organization, appears to be clearly in favour of experimenting with Comprehensive, Multilateral, Omnibus or Multipurpose High Schools. While welcoming the trend as a move in the right direction, the discerning educationist must be careful to see that it does not become just the latest fashion and fad, on the contrary, we must watch over and guide the experiment and evaluate,



from time to time, its relative success and failure and the overall strength and weakness of this new type of secondary school. It is obvious that the success or failure of the experiment will be relative with regard to different countries, and even different schools in the same country. Hence in the succeeding chapters an attempt will be made to assess the situation in some of the progressive countries in which the experiment has already yielded results, good and bad, that make some sort of a tentative overall assessment possible, as well as in India where the experiment is still in its infancy.

But before we attempt to assess the practical working out of the experiment, it is essential to consider the arguments advanced for and against the Multipurpose or Comprehensive school by its protagonists and their opponents, and to evaluate, as objectively and validly as possible, whether and to what extent this type of secondary school is based on sound educational, social, psychological, economic and political foundations. "Most arguments in favour of the Multilateral or Comprehensive schools", states Prof. M. L. Jacks, "(when they are not based on administrative convenience) are either social or political though masquerading as educational". Socio-economic, and even, to some extent, political considerations are important in estimating the value of a particular type of school, yet it is mainly on educational and psychological grounds that it must stand or fall. For this is primarily an educational matter, and the heart of the matter is: Are these schools educationally desirable? The protagonists of the Multipurpose school state that they are, and have been quick to point out the educational advantages which the Multipurpose schools enjoy in relation to the traditional type of one-track Secondary schools. These are briefly as follows.

Whereas the traditional school provides only a College-preparatory course for students intending to proceed to Higher studies, the Multipurpose school provides varied types of secondary courses for students with diverse aims, interests, and abilities. Hence while the former caters only for a few at the expense of the majority, the latter endeavours to provide for each and every pupil suitable opportunity to use and develop his natural aptitudes and inclinations in the special course of studies chosen by him. The Multipurpose school is, by the internal compulsions of its



nature and goals, a larger school than the ordinary High School with a greater variety of staff and educational facilities, hence in it individual differences can be better catered for and accommodated. This ability to recognize and make provision, to a much greater degree than is possible in the ordinary High School, for every pupil's individual needs, abilities and aptitudes, and the mingling of adolescents of all types in the same school, which teaches them to recognize their differing strengths and weaknesses, it is argued, creates a much more satisfactory educational climate and school environment than is possible in single-track, segregated High Schools of different types. This claim has been contested by some educators who claim that "special" schools are educationally more effective than Multipurpose or Multilateral schools, but Earle in his book *Reconstruction of Secondary Education* contends that "there is no ground for believing that a Multilateral school, because of wider interests and more numerous problems must necessarily be less efficient than a selective school which concentrates on a narrower range of activities. Given a competent staff and pupils of equal calibre, there are seldom any differences in the comparative results, whether these be the test of examinations or success in after life. Such differences as there are spring from the wider aims of the school and may prove to be highly desirable ones."

Finally, it is claimed that the larger and more complex organization of the Multipurpose school is not only mere economical from the financial point of view, but also from the educational viewpoint in that it involves less wastage of individual talents and abilities, hopes and aspirations than the ordinary school.

Psychologically, it is claimed that the Multipurpose school bypasses or mitigates, if it does not completely solve, the vexed question of the selection and allocation of pupils for different types of secondary schooling. Providing, as it does, a greater variety of educational media and diversified courses than the ordinary High School, the Multipurpose school facilitates proper guidance in the choice of studies, and "helps to solve the problems of the wrongly classified pupil because transfer within the same school is easier to arrange than transfer from one school to another." The problem of providing for the "late-developers"

is also solved more easily in such schools. Hence though selection and classification of pupils still remains to be done, and continues to be a difficult and complex task in the Multipurpose or in any other type of High School system, yet it cannot be more easily and happily solved if all pupils are in the same school. And there is little doubt that educational and vocational guidance will be more of a success in a Multipurpose school than in any other kind of secondary school.

A strong case is also made out for Multipurpose schools on sociological and egalitarian grounds. The Multipurpose school, or its counterpart in other countries (Comprehensive, Multilateral and Omnibus schools), it is claimed, "is the ideal school for a democracy because it seeks to provide for the diverse aims, interests and abilities of all or the most of the children of a typical community, irrespective of any social intellectual or religious differences, thus providing true equality of educational opportunity." Further, it removes all invidious distinctions between students preparing for different courses of studies, breaking down the sense of inferiority that is associated with vocational subjects, and makes it possible to plan the educational system on a truly democratic basis.

Perhaps, the most important aspect in which Multilateral schools can make a positive contribution to the world of tomorrow, says Dr. Earle, is that in it children can meet on common ground. "They need not necessarily work together, indeed in a large organisation they cannot, but they can, and should associate in games, physical activities, and in all forms of social and occupational activities. Each child is undoubtedly helped to adjust more effectively his personal attitudes to and in relation with other people, and to avoid forming misconceptions about his neighbours. This is not a one-way traffic, for every individual benefits, and the prejudices that flourish where there is ignorance, disappears where there is a fuller knowledge. No doubt in a Multilateral school, owing to the immaturity and lack of experience of its members, mistaken ideas will arise in connection with different aspects of the social order. Larger association in a school of all types of pupils is however the best corrective." If we accept the fact that the aim of secondary education is not merely development of the mind or academic attainment, which is only one



aspect, though an important one, of a total education, and that social education and training for democratic citizenship is an essential function of a school, then there is no doubt that a strong case can be made out, on this ground alone, for the Multilateral or Multipurpose High School. In this connection the words of the Report of the Advisory Council of Scotland on Secondary Education are worth quoting. "It is clear therefore," write the Council, "that the one supreme requirement of the secondary school must be something which has hitherto been much less highly regarded, that it should provide a rich social environment where adolescents grew in character and understanding through the interplay of personalities rather than the imparting of knowledge. Education thus presents itself as a preparation for life and as an irreplaceable part of life itself; hence the good school is not to be measured by any tale of examination successes, however impressive, but by the extent to which it has filled the years of youth with security, graciousness and ordered freedom, and has been a seed bed for the flowering in good season of all that is of good report."

The social education which Multipurpose schools should be in a position to provide is one of their best features. Their protagonists argue, with no little justification, that if democracy is a way of life whose *raison d'être* is the need for mutual co-operation and fellowship among men of all kinds and degrees, the Multipurpose school is the natural and inevitable educational organ by which a democracy should strive to reach its goal, for it will be as varied and multiple as life in its school population and in the total and many-sided experiences provided by it. There can be no true social democracy or Welfare State, they emphasize, till all distinctions social, economic and intellectual are levelled out, and the school system should be such as to promote and not retard this process of levelling. The Multipurpose school, based on the idea of fellowship and community rather than selection and segregation into different schools, will help towards the promotion of a true democracy, for children reared in an atmosphere of isolation and rivalry will not understand their fellows, or value a society based on the common good. The champions of the Multipurpose schools are convinced, in short, that the foundations of democracy and social reconstruction can best be laid in

such schools, even if in the beginning they are oases in the desert of a competitive and stratified society, for, they argue, only if children are educated democratically, will democracy become a social and economic reality.

There is, needless to say, the other side of the picture, for, while Multipurpose, Multilateral and Comprehensive schools have many educational, psychological and sociological advantages, they also suffer from corresponding drawbacks. The ideal of secondary education and equality of educational opportunity for all is an attractive ideal, but the practical difficulties of translating this ideal into terms of a workable school organization are very great, even in the case of the Multipurpose schools. From the educational standpoint these schools, while possessing the advantages outlined earlier, also suffer from severe limitations and deadlocks. The basic issue, as Professor Kandel points out "is whether the right education for the right pupils under the right teacher" can be provided for all in one school better than in separate schools organized to meet differences of ability and aptitude.

Supporters of the Multipurpose schools are convinced that the right answer is in One School; antagonists argue that this answer does not correspond with facts on the following grounds:

To begin with, to achieve their educational ideals these schools will have to be fairly large to be fully effective. It is true that in the U.S.A. there are Comprehensive Schools for 500 — 600 pupils, which is probably the optimum number for a good school, but experts calculate that to be efficient, economical and fully effective, such schools should have a minimum of 1000 — 1500 pupils. Apart from the immediate and almost unsolvable difficulties of finding suitable sites in large towns, experience in other countries has shown that their internal organization and administration will be extremely complicated and bureaucratic. Hence the extreme difficulty of finding a Head who will be able to adequately measure up to the jobs of supervising and guiding along sound lines such a complex and many-sided organization. The considerable size of the school will render increasingly difficult the task of knowing his large, variously qualified staff, and still less the pupils really intimately; hence such schools will increasingly tend to be organized and regimented like small factories. There will accordingly be a grave danger of a de-



personalizing of the school and of a relative dehumanizing both of the administration, of the staff, and, above all, of the individual pupils for in a school of this size the individual will get lost and his individual needs will be neglected. There will also be the ever present danger of such a school being merely a loose conglomeration of courses, or of sub-schools on a common campus, a mere administrative convenience and not an organic unity in diversity as it ought to be, if it is to be a real school. Further, the successful Head will tend to be a mere administrator ruling his staff and boys perhaps with bureaucratic efficiency, but unable to put the stamp of his personality on the school as a whole. Hence the overall educational result will be greater waste and inefficiency, for trying to cater within its walls for all types of adolescents, and to provide for all their needs, it is likely to make adequate provision for none. And there is likely to result a levelling down rather than a levelling up, so that there may be a superficial gain in administrative efficiency at the cost of the indispensable human factor in education.

The staffing of such a school will also, as has been mentioned earlier, present very great difficulties. Not only will it be very hard to find a Head capable of supervising, improving and inspiring all the sides of a Multipurpose school — Humanities, Technical, Science, Commerce, etc.,—equally effectively, but the staff, if and when available, of the various 'departments' with different and often conflicting backgrounds, qualifications, status, interests and objectives will not mix and merge easily into a homogeneous and united team, and the individual child is likely to be pulled in numerous directions amid the competing aims and interests of the staff. Parity of status and attractiveness, moreover, it is argued, will seldom if ever be achieved between the various 'streams,' 'sides' or diversified courses provided in the Multipurpose, Multilateral or Comprehensive schools. Experience in England where the 'Grammar,' 'Technical,' and 'Modern' sides of the Multilateral or Comprehensive schools enjoy a rapidly descending degree of social esteem and popularity, and of the U.S.A. where the College-preparatory course enjoys a very much higher esteem than the 'Vocational,' 'General' or other courses, bears this out. In India also the Science and Technical courses enjoy a greater esteem and status than the other five. Hence,



its opponents argue, by setting up stresses and strains within a heterogenous school community, which will soon undermine the superficial unity of the school organizations, and by setting up an educational and social caste-system within the school, the Multipurpose or Multilateral school creates more educational problems than it solves. In short, such a school in trying to cater for everybody caters for nobody.

In attempting to achieve equality of educational opportunity for all, it is further argued, such schools tend to identify equality of opportunity with identity of opportunity, based as it is on the premise that if all adolescents are educated together in the same school they will fare better than if children with like abilities, needs, and problems are segregated in separate schools each dedicated to a specific function. Speaking from the educational standpoint of this unfortunate tendency to equate equality of educational opportunity with identity of opportunities, Prof. Kandel, perhaps the world's greatest authority on Comparative Education, after a careful study of the question, utters the grave warning that "There is too much of a disposition to-day to confuse its meaning in the name of democracy and a certain equalitarianism which may in the long run lead to a levelling down rather than in raising standards as high as possible in the interests of national well-being and individual happiness. There is a real danger that the effort to provide equal opportunities for all will end in an equalitarianism, in which the ends desired will not be attained." And Prof. M. L. Jacks is of the similar opinion, for, according to him, 'It is indeed difficult to conceive an institution where there would be less equality of opportunity in education, identity of opportunity is not equality, it leads indeed to gross inequalities and the only equality which members of such a school would enjoy would be equality of missing opportunities of education they might otherwise have enjoyed.'

In India, moreover, in addition to the general drawbacks and educational dangers and deficiencies pointed out in the preceding paragraphs, there are certain special additional limitations and deficiencies. These stem primarily from the often overlooked fact that our so-called Multipurpose schools are only so in name, and not in fact. Any school which has more than two of the seven diversified courses is designated Multipurpose so that the



choice of a pupil in these schools is limited to only three options, except in a few model Multipurpose schools which have four or more diversified courses. Even in a model multipurpose school, which has all the seven options, the variety of individual interests, abilities and vocational ambitions to be found among the pupils, and the multiplicity of employment opportunities for which they have to be prepared cannot be given adequate scope for development and preparation in seven types or courses. True, it is not possible to provide a special diversified course for each pupil, which is the ideal aimed at in the Comprehensive schools in the U.S.A., still many more elective groups than those envisaged by the Mudaliar Commission will have to be evolved in time to do justice to the majority of the boys and girls in the Multipurpose schools.

Again, the Multipurpose school in India, even in its ideal form, suffers from a fundamental defect. The Mudaliar Commission envisaged that the secondary education provided in these schools would serve as a terminal education for the vast majority of boys and girls of average and below-average ability, which would give them the requisite general education and vocational training to prepare them to be good citizens and for careers in industry, commerce, agriculture and related professions on leaving school, and as a University-entrance type of education for the relatively small percentage of children who would proceed for higher studies, general or professional.

Unfortunately due to the overwhelming pressure of the Universities, the mania for higher education with a view to securing white collar jobs among the educated middle class, the chronic unemployment problem among the educated which makes Colleges 'Waiting rooms' till they can get some kind of a post, the regulations and syllabuses drawn up by all Examination bodies for the new Higher Secondary Certificate, which marks the climax and sets the seal on the education provided at the Multipurpose schools, has now put this certificate beyond the educational reach of the majority of the pupils in such schools. This has resulted in increasing wastage and frustration, and made the education provided in these schools excessively University-entrance dominated so that it is unsuitable as a terminal life entrance education for the majority, who, on leaving the Multipurpose schools, with or



without a Higher Secondary Certificate, and irrespective of the diversified course they may have chosen, are ill-equipped to take up careers in Industry and Commerce.

Further, largely because of inadequate 'public relations' and preparation of the ground for the Multipurpose experiment, the blind force of inertia and resistance to change, the continued existence of vested interests of all kinds, and of unwillingness or inability to face up to the challenge of the times, they have not yet been widely accepted by Heads, teachers, parents and the Community at large.

Heads and teachers have, by and large, been slow to appreciate and face up to, or attempt to work out honestly, sincerely, and unremittingly the full implications of the Multipurpose idea. This is largely due not only to the fact that it is hard to upset traditional ways and ideas in the school world, but also to the fact that the Multipurpose school has not been a creation of developing experience, rather it has been thrust upon them from above, and they do not like it any more than do the parents. And while there are exceptions, there seems little doubt, as is shown in, a later Chapter that, by and large, parents are generally cold to the Multipurpose scheme, and without their enlightened co-operation its ultimate success will always be doubtful.

The main psychological justification for the Multipurpose school, that it solves the vexed problem of selection and allocation among the various streams, sides or courses which is at the heart of the problem of providing diversified secondary education for all, is also not foolproof. Even in a Multipurpose, Multilateral or Comprehensive school this problem of finding the right stream or course for each adolescent remains, and even though its solution is rendered easier in such a school, as transfers from one stream or course to another are easier and can be made at the appropriate time, yet the problem remains intractable. Choice between courses and allocation of pupils to one or the other is a social as well as a psychological problem because of the lack of parity of status and esteem between the respective courses; even in a Multipurpose or Comprehensive school pupils have to be allocated, and parents convinced of the justice and professional soundness of the allocation made. Speaking of his experience on this vexed and explosive matter in the



U. K. and the U. S. A., Prof. Kandel observes: "The idea that heads of schools or administrative officers know, or can know, what is best for a child is not one which parents as yet willingly accept."

In actual fact, it has been found in these countries that selection of courses is often made on the criterion of parental background and social status rather than on the ability and aptitudes of the pupils.

This is true of India too, even more so, as all Guidance workers can attest and as the replies to our questionnaire clearly indicate.

On sociological grounds too such schools have been counter-attacked. The terms Comprehensive or Multipurpose or Multi-lateral, state the opponents of these schools, have often been used as attractive synonyms for democracy, but in practice such schools fail to produce democratic consciousness or practices among their pupils or in the community which they serve. And many prominent educationists in the U. S. A., where the Comprehensive School is commonly accepted as the ideal school for democracy, argue that in large cities small, compact, specialized Secondary schools promote democracy better than large, amorphous Comprehensive Schools, for the latter are too large and complex for the pupils to comprehend them as a unit or feel they have a contribution to make to the good of the whole. Mere organization alone cannot inculcate equalitarian, social and democratic awareness, ideals and practices; in fact it has been clearly proved, both in the U.K. and the U.S.A., that the socio-economic status of children outside the school enters with them into the school and reveals itself both in the choice of diversified courses and in the extra-curricular activities in which they participate. No study, along the lines made by Prof. Olive Banks in the U.K., or Profs. Warner, Loeb and Havinghurst in *Who Shall Be Educated*, which revealed how, in both countries, class differences outside the school enter into and affect every aspect of school life and activity, has yet been made in India, but from the authors, limited experience of the working of Multipurpose schools it can be said that an objective study of this problem would yield very similar results. Hence there is much truth in Prof. Kandel's assertion that the contention of the supporters



of Comprehensive Schools that mere living together can produce democratic values has not been proved in America where the Comprehensive School has produced neither social co-operation nor democratic awareness and practice. "The most pressing of all arguments," states Prof. Kandel in his *New Era in Education*, speaking of the Comprehensive Schools of the U. S. A., "is that to educate all pupils in the same school would eliminate social class differences and promote social understanding and co-operation, something that has not been achieved in the American High School. The ideal underlying the idea of the Comprehensive High School—that social understanding and the elimination of social class differences would result from the mingling of all pupils in the same school—has not proved to be valid."

All this adds up to the fact that in an attempt to realize parity of status and equality of opportunity among pupils from different social strata, it is not enough merely to put them together in a Common School. Parity can only be achieved when the make-up of society and the social attitudes of adults are changed. Schools are relatively powerless against hostile social conditions and forces, and Comprehensive, Multilateral or Multipurpose schools will be unable to function effectively as agents of social change so long as stubborn inequalities exist in the society outside their walls, for schools are community institutions to a large extent, and reflect the current divisions, attitudes and values of the community they serve, whether they like it or not. We must therefore recognize the incontrovertible fact that the mere provision of various diversified courses or types of secondary education, each with its own socio-economic implications, in the same school will not by itself make for parity of esteem or equality of status; indeed, to provide, for all secondary education of equivalent educational value and leading to equally profitable socio-economic returns after school is as difficult in one school as in different, specialized schools. Despite the fact that progressive educationists all over the world agree that secondary education should be of diverse types to cater for the great variety of individual differences among adolescents, that no one type of secondary education is, in the abstract, better than any other, and that the best type of secondary education for an adolescent is



the type best suited to his age, abilities and aptitudes, yet there is little doubt that, to quote Kandel, "in the popular mind secondary education has acquired a definite connotation both in terms of curricula and social prestige. The consequence is that any departure from the traditional academic courses in the effort of meeting the demands of individual differences of ability is regarded as inferior in prestige and quality."

If this verdict is true with regard to the U. K. and the U. S. A., it is trebly true with regard to our own country. This is clearly revealed by the history of secondary education, outlined in the last chapter, which clearly shows that every attempt to break through the limited, cramping, University-oriented, examination-ridden type of secondary education which has monopolized the field of secondary education ever since its inception has been virtually futile. And even though the Mudaliar Commission did, in theory, break right away from this narrow groove, yet the regulations and syllabuses for the Higher Secondary Certificate examinations all over India have clearly been framed with both eyes on the University so that the Higher Secondary School will still continue to provide a University entrance type of secondary education for the few, instead of a terminal life-entrance type for the majority, despite the fact that the Commission emphasized that this was their primary function.

Taking into account both the advantages and the disadvantages of the Comprehensive or Multipurpose school, can this type of school organization justify itself? While it is clear that it is no panacea, that it is one, but not the only justifiable type of secondary school organization, and, further, that it will not suit all countries and all communities even in the same country, we can tentatively conclude that, on the balance, it probably can: for if we examine closely the criticisms levelled against it, we find that most of them are against the way the system is worked and against the extravagant claims made on its behalf by enthusiasts rather than against the system itself.

The first fundamental fact that must be emphasized is that the Comprehensive or Multipurpose school is not an accomplished fact, but a great experiment which is still largely in the experimental stage. Practical difficulties and obstacles are bound to arise in the course of the working out of this experiment, to

which practical solutions, based on sound educational theory and practice and emerging after a process of enlightened trial and error, will have to be sought. Such solutions may not always be found to be successful, but this is no reason for throwing out the baby with the bath water and declaring that the great experiment itself is not worth trying, or is doomed to failure. And while we as educationists must continue to seek more valid solutions for the practical, administrative problems of the Comprehensive or Multipurpose schools, we should not attempt to disparage, underrate or oppose parallel experiments which seek to solve the basic problems of providing the best possible secondary education for all along different and apparently conflicting lines. Keeping these fundamental principles in view, let us examine the major criticisms against the Multipurpose or Comprehensive school to see whether they are inherent in the schools themselves, or are the result of a faulty working out of the Multipurpose idea, which can, with care, be considerably mitigated, even if they cannot be completely eliminated.

It is true that such schools to be effective will have to be reasonably large, but, as experience in the U. S. A. has shown, there is no reason for them to be so large as to be completely unwieldy. A Class VI to XI Multipurpose school in India with duplicate sections in each class of 35-40 would give a total roll of 420-480; if a third section in each class were added it would increase the roll to 630-720. This would not be an excessive number for a school, even though it may not be the optimum number for a good school. If the Multipurpose school, as frequently happens in India, has an attached Primary section with comparable numbers, such a school would be unreasonably large for effective administration by a single Head; but it could always be organized as two distinct departments each under a Deputy Head, with a Principal over the whole to co-ordinate and integrate the work of the primary and secondary schools. Moreover, even if in a Class VI-XI Multipurpose school, with primary and secondary department with approximately 750 pupils each it will not be possible for the Principal or Headmaster to know every pupil individually, there is no reason why they cannot know him or why the responsibility of catering for the individual needs and interests of every pupil in the school cannot be en-



trusted to Deputy Heads or Housemasters. "The Head in a large school need not be a mere administrator, he can be the inspiration and driving force of a great organisation, the creator of its ethos and the leader of his colleagues." The family spirit and living individual contact with pupils can be also achieved by devices such as the House, home room and class system, or a modified version of the Oxbridge tutorial system, and provision can thus be made for each child to have an individual guide, philosopher and friend from among the Staff.

The other material and practical difficulties of Multipurpose Schools, such as finding suitable sites, experienced Heads and qualified teachers and adequate financial resources, while important, are not insuperable and it is hoped many of them will be solved during the period of the Third Five Year Plan as a result of the comprehensive measures planned by the Central and State Governments, (many of which will be dealt with in a succeeding chapter in some detail), to overcome these bottlenecks. Given a Head of vision and experience, backed by a team of capable teachers, and enough autonomy and money to realize their plans, there is no reason why a Multipurpose or Comprehensive school should become, not a loose conglomerate of diversified courses or a heterogenous collection of watertight courses, or sub-schools on a common campus, but a single, dynamic, well-integrated organism with a number of different but interrelated departments. Further, while it is true that complete parity of status and esteem between the diversified courses will not be achieved by the mere fact of providing them in the same school, yet greater parity will be achieved by this means than by providing them in different schools isolated from one another.

True equality of opportunity, similarly, may not be possible as Multipurpose schools in India are not truly Multipurpose; this difficulty can be met by making them so by the addition of further diversified courses mostly of a vocational and practical character such as is envisaged in the Junior Technical Diploma Course, and other lower level trade and industrial courses. In these courses emphasis on practical training will be even greater and the academic standard lower than in the Junior Technical Course for the theoretical part of this Junior Technical Course will be beyond



the reach of a large number of pupils in the Multipurpose schools; and similar Junior Technical and trade courses are also necessary with reference to certain of the other diversified courses, notably Commerce, Home Science, Agriculture and Fine Arts. In fact if Multipurpose schools is to justify its name, and provide for the abilities, aptitudes and interests of all its pupils, and not only, as they are doing at present, for a small minority who wish to go to College, we envisage they will have to provide diversified courses of two and possibly three broad types and levels.

At the top A level for the 25-30 per cent of gifted children, the Multipurpose School must provide a core curriculum plus diversified elective courses in Humanities, Science, etc. of the academic standard and vocational bias provided for Class XI Higher Secondary schools. The objective of these courses will be broadly cultural, and their aim will be to prepare pupils for the University or for the advanced courses at Degree or Diploma level at various professional institutions, i.e. Engineering and Medical colleges, Colleges of Home Science and Fine Arts and Agricultural and Polytechnics. Such may be the pattern of education of India's future leaders, administrators, scientists, technologists and top-level professional people in various spheres of life.

At the next B level the Multipurpose schools must provide, for approximately the next 40 per cent who cannot measure up to the intellectual level of the A courses, a group of Junior technical courses in various branches of engineering, in Commerce, Home Science, Agriculture and Fine Arts, broadly on the pattern of the new Junior Technical Course in which there will be a 'general' core curriculum and vocational subject's prescribed; in such courses the academic burden of core curriculum prescribed should be reduced, and the extent and vocational content of the practical subjects increased. Junior Technical Course pupils should spend half the day on the general subjects and half the day on the vocational subjects. This does not mean that a liberal education is to be provided for the A Grade Student, and a narrow practical or vocational or technical education to the Grade B. "The whole modern approach to this question," to quote the Mudaliar Commission, "is based on the insight that the intellectual and cultural development of



different individuals takes place best through a variety of media, that the book or the study of traditional academic subjects is not the only door to the education of personality, and that in the case of many, perhaps a majority, of the children, practical work, intelligently organized, can unlock their latent energies much more successfully than the traditional subjects which address themselves only to the mind, or worse still the memory. If this principle is clearly understood by educationists, they will see to it that these various courses are accorded parity of esteem, at least in the school, and that students are helped to select their course with due regard to the actual abilities and talents. In view of the fact that all students in Multipurpose Schools need to be trained in certain basic ideas, attitudes, and appreciations essential for playing the role of intelligent citizens in a democracy, they should be a common core of subjects of general value and utility which all students may study. But we must clearly realize that the other special practical subjects can also contribute their part towards producing, co-operative, well balanced and useful members of society." The point of view of the Secondary Education Commission, expressed in the above quotation and sentiments, are perhaps more pertinent when applied to the pattern of courses and syllabuses drawn up for the Junior Technical Diploma, and similarly patterned courses which, we hope, will be drawn up for their courses of equivalent standard and character in other vocational fields such as Home Science, Agriculture, Commerce, Fine Arts etc. than to the A level courses. Such course, should aim to provide pupils with a terminal secondary education which will equip them for an apprenticeship that will in a few years turn them into competent craftsmen in their respective fields, capable of earning a decent livelihood as well as being intelligent citizens of a democracy. Such Vocational-cum-General Education Courses will undoubtedly be suitable for a much greater number of pupils than the predominantly University-Entrance academically based Higher Secondary Courses.

But even the A Grade Higher Secondary and the B Grade Junior "technical courses (the former geared to the above average 25-30 per cent of pupils and the latter to the 40 per cent of average pupils) will not cover all the pupils in a Multipurpose School in which the law of the survival of the fittest is not too rigorously



applied. There will still be a hard core of approximately 30 per cent below average (not educationally subnormal, for these will need a special school) pupils, for whom even the modest academic and vocational standards of the Junior technical courses will be too much. For such pupils a variety of trade and commercial courses will have to be provided either in the Multipurpose School or in specialized Trade and Industrial Schools. These courses will also have a core curriculum to provide a minimum basis of general education and citizenship training, but this core, consisting only of the Mother Tongue, Arithmetic, Elementary Science, and Social Studies and a Craft, as well as the actual syllabus content should be reduced to a minimum, and the vocational and practical side of their education and training ought to be stressed even more than in the Junior technical courses. Pupils taking these courses should spend perhaps two-thirds of their time in Classes IX to XI on practical work, and be prepared to take up after a short intensive period of training on the job semi-skilled work in industry and commerce on leaving school.

The Multipurpose school is ostensibly meant to cater for all adolescents from 14-17; it was envisaged, by the Mudaliar Commission, to provide a terminal secondary education for the majority to equip them on leaving school to earn a living in Industry and Commerce, and a University-Entrance education only for a small minority. In practice our existing Multipurpose schools, unlike the Comprehensive schools of the U. S. A. which approach much nearer the ideal set forth by the Commission, fulfil neither objective. It is, we are convinced, only by the provision of secondary education of the varying types and at the various levels outlined above, either in one common School or in separate specialized schools on a common campus, that these twin objectives will be realized, and true equality of educational opportunity, provided for all the children attending the Multipurpose schools.

Finally, public relations between educational administrators and the Heads of Multipurpose schools and between these Heads and their staff, and in turn between educators and the parents, guardians and the community at large, which have retarded and which will continue to retard the evolution and practical achievements of the Multipurpose schools, can be counteracted by propaganda



campaigns of the right type. These should aim to make all parties affected by the Multipurpose experiment realize its value and its importance, its potentialities and its difficulties, its weaknesses and its strengths, and educational administrators must issue forth from their ivory towers into the dust and the heat of the educational arena to share in the trials and errors, the successes and failures of this great experiment, and take the educational rank and file into full partnership in the great adventure.

The socio-psychological problem of selection and allocation of pupils to the various types and levels of courses outlined above will not be solved in a Multipurpose school merely by the contiguity of these various courses in the same school, but only by an adequate guidance programme.

If schools are provided with such a service, such problems will be solved to a major extent, and, in any case a solution to this vexed problem is more likely to be found in the Multipurpose School than in different, isolated types of High schools.

The sociological criticism of the Comprehensive or Multipurpose school is valid in so far that no form of organization, however perfect, will by itself ensure democratic human relationships. But there is no gainsaying the fact that these schools are, from the sociological viewpoint, more equitable, and a more realistic preparation for citizenship.

It is true that all kinds of communal class and caste barriers and differences do exist in the schools, as they do in the society outside these walls; but in society these are being gradually broken down and eliminated or mitigated, and the nation's schools should try and accelerate and not retard this welcome process. The basis of effective social change must be, partially at least, laid in the schools, and in a Multipurpose or Comprehensive school children of all varieties and levels of ability, aptitude and vocational ambitions, and drawn from different strata of society and from castes and creeds can most easily learn to live together in mutual respect and co-operation with one another. A true democracy is a community united by a common purpose, interests, and ethos; where better, it may be cogently argued, can the foundation for such a community be laid but in Comprehensive or Multipurpose schools?

A final and impartial weighing of the pros and cons of the Multipurpose schools leaves the authors of the considered opinion that the balance on the credit side is enough to justify their continuation in India as an important and vital element in a rich and significant pattern of secondary school organization. They conclude with a quotation from Dr. Earle: "There is every reason to believe that difficulties that have occurred wherever Multilateral schools have been established are no more than the growing pains of its newer organization. It is possible that future generations of parents accustomed to this form of organization and understanding it better than they do now will regard it as the most natural way of educating the youth of a nation."



### CHAPTER III

## MULTILATERAL AND COMPREHENSIVE SCHOOLS IN ENGLAND

COMPREHENSIVE and Multilateral schools are a relatively new feature of the educational landscape in England and can only be understood by a study of the historical factors and forces that brought them into existence. For tradition dies hard in England, and changes, however radical in their final shape and outcome, tend to be brought about by evolution rather than revolution. This is particularly true in the field of education, for the present system of education in England is, for the most part, the product of gradual change and evolution over the past century. But war, especially modern total war, has a way of violently disturbing the even tenor of one's ways, and upsetting traditional habits and ways of thinking and acting, and there can be little doubt that the two World Wars which England has survived in the first half of the 20th century have shaken her out of her smugness, her taking-for grantedness, and her blind and irrational and somewhat excessive love of tradition. To quote Dr. Edmund King, "External history and internal social change brought about a revolution more radical than some countries have achieved with bloody cataclysms. The revolution caused by these factors in the Englishman's way of living and thinking is apparent: every sphere of national life is shaken by the violent and heavy moral, cultural, socio-economic and political forces released by it." The tangible product of this matrix of forces in the field of education was the historic Education Act 1944 which was meant to be the cornerstone of an edifice of reconstruction that would change the face of England, make her 'a land fit for heroes' and a shining example to the free peoples of the world. England may have lost her political empire, she could in its place create a true

Empire of ideas. Such was the Vision and the Gleam....

The most striking feature of the 1944 Act was its definition of education as a continuous process of development from the cradle to the grave, divisible into three main stages—primary, secondary and further education. The Act suggested far-reaching changes in the primary stage to make it a better foundation for the stages that were to follow, and broke new ground in its vision of an adequate provision for further or post-school education for young people, the middle aged and the old.

But the greatest contribution of the 1944 Act, with its battle cry of "Secondary Education for All," was undoubtedly in the vital field of secondary education, which would mark the terminal stage in the formal education of the vast majority of the nation's children. Till the passing of this Act, which gathered up and incorporated the findings of three great 20th-century Educational Commissions in England—the Hadow, the Spens and the Norwood — there had been, apart from the famous public Schools which served a small social and economic elite, a dual system of education in England. There was, on the one hand, a system of Elementary Schools which served the mass of the people, providing elementary education which ended at 14, and a "Secondary system" for a selected minority, generally drawn from the middle and professional classes, who either had the brains to win a coveted scholarship to a Secondary school or the money to pay for entry. The 1944 Act replaced this "dual system" with a unified system of primary education, followed by a period of secondary education for all the nation's children, so that "the privilege of the few became the right of all."

"Secondary education for all" and "equality of educational opportunity," at the secondary as well as the primary level, marked more than a mere quantitative advance; it implied a new conception of what secondary education is, or at least should be; and the reinterpretation of the objectives, the nature and the scope of secondary education which this Act provided marked a much greater revolution than the mere extension of the privilege to everybody.

Till the 20th-century the Secondary school in England was conceived as providing a well-determined type of academic education leading to the University and the learned professions. At



first its mental pabulum was confined to the Classics; later, under stress of various socio-economic forces and developments in educational theory and practice, "modern" subjects like Mathematics, Science, History and Geography were added, but the *raison d'être* of the Secondary school remained the same; secondary education meant the provision of "advanced courses" in certain subjects, which either provided "mental discipline" or which met the entrance demands of the Universities and the learned professions.

The historic Hadow Reports in the thirties broke through this limited conception; it described secondary education not as a type but as a stage in the education, not merely of a fortunate few but of all adolescents. "Secondary education should as far as possible be regarded as a single whole within which there would be a variety of types of education supplied, but which will be marked by common characteristics, that its aim will be to provide for the needs of the children who are entering and passing through the stage of adolescence."

The Spens Report (1938) went on to outline three principal "types" of Secondary education—dubbed "Grammar," "Technical" and "Modern" after the three types of post-primary schools that had begun to emerge even before the actual carrying through of the "Hadow Reorganisation" and the Norwood Committee (1943) in Dent's words "transformed Tripartism from a proposal into a doctrine" by advocating three types of secondary schools—Grammar, Modern and Technical and claiming to have discovered that the majority of adolescents fell into one of three broad categories—the academic, Grammar-school type, the Technical-school type, and the "practical," Modern-school type.

The 1944 Education Act collated the findings of these learned Commissions and formulated the new conception of Secondary education that has been emerging not only in England but in most progressive countries after the war. It defined Secondary education not in terms of certain subjects to be studied but as an education suited to the age, ability and aptitudes of pupils completing the Secondary stage in their education, and laid upon the Local Education Authorities the duty of providing "such variety of courses and schools" as would cater for the

3 A's of all adolescents from eleven plus till they left school—the majority at 15, and minority at 16 plus to 18 plus. This new concept was further clarified and elaborated in the Ministry's pamphlet "The New Secondary Education" where a complete and progressive education was defined as one which promoted the total education of every individual adolescent, an education in which "attention must be paid not only to the intellectual, but to the social, emotional, physical and spiritual growth of the child."

A clear realization of the full and many-sided implications of this new and enriched conception of the aim, nature and scope of secondary education for all was bound to have serious repercussions on the existing organization of secondary education in England. While there was broad general agreement on the objectives, nature and scope of secondary education, a fairly definite cleavage of opinion soon became evident among educational thinkers and practitioners in England concerning the administrative framework which should give the new secondary education, "a local habitation and a name."

What type of organization would best promote the total development of all children of secondary school age? Was the existing tripartite pattern of secondary schooling which has evolved, partly by accident, partly by conscious design, during the second quarter of the 20th century educationally sound? Was it capable of providing true "equality of educational opportunity for the entire secondary school age range? If, when weighed in the balance, it was found wanting, by what alternative pattern of secondary school organisation should it be replaced?

The debate which tends to centre on the burning issue of "One School or Three" has waxed fast and furious in the U.K. over the past 15 years, and still continues. Protagonists of the widely prevalent Tripartism point out that it is hallowed by usage and tradition; that "parity of esteem is possible between the three types of schools provided they are equally well housed, financed and staffed"; that equality of educational opportunity does not mean identity of opportunity, or the allocation of children to the same school, but ensuring that each child is placed in a type of secondary school that caters best for his ability and aptitudes; that adolescents broadly fall into the three broad groups, char-



acterised by the Norwood Committee as the "academic," applied science, and practical, whose respective individual needs, interests and aptitudes can be most satisfactorily met in separate Grammar, Technical and Modern Schools.

Opponents of Tripartism ridicule the idea of three types of adolescent, as psychologically untenable; point out that the three types of secondary education in existence, "represent not one system but three, different in history, aim, social status and ethos, and separated by gulfs of social snobbery" which makes Tripartism "the mirror and prop of a class-riven society," and thus indefensible on sociological grounds; and claim that "parity of status" and "equality of educational opportunity" will never be realized so long as this system exists. When challenged to produce an alternative form of organization, the critics of the Tripartite system usually plump for the Multilateral or Comprehensive School.

Apart from the brief summary in previous paragraph, we shall not elaborate the case for or against Tripartism *versus* the Multilateral or Comprehensive School; this has already been dealt with in some detail in Chapter II. We shall instead accept the Comprehensive and Multilateral Schools of England as an educational fact, and endeavour to examine in some detail their objectives, organization and administration, staffing, curricula, methods, results and general tone and ethos with a view to trying to unravel their real strength and weaknesses, and endeavouring to draw out the lessons, if any, that they have for educational administrators, heads and teachers in our own country where our great "Multipurpose experiment" is in the process of being worked out.

A brief survey of the specific history of the Multilateral or Comprehensive Schools in England would perhaps, at this point, be not entirely out of place. The rigid 19th and early 20th century distinction between elementary education and secondary education had ceased to exist by the time of the Hadow Report, when, side by side with the traditional Secondary (Grammar) school, grew up other types of post-primary education of a secondary type in which the education and training provided was different from that provided by the Grammar schools. The Hadow Report recommended a bi-lateral system with two types of Secondary Schools—



Grammar Schools and Modern Schools, the former distinguished from the latter by a longer period of schooling and more academic curriculum. The Spens Report, because of the rise in importance of the Junior Technical School, advocated a tripartite system of secondary education to be given in the three types of secondary schools. The Spens Report examined the question of providing these three types of secondary education in the same school and decided that while Multilateral schools were "too subversive a change" to introduce to the old-established educational system of this country, one or two of these schools might be worth experimenting with.

The White Paper (1943) which proceeded the passing of the 1944 Act went a little further than this cautious point of view in endorsing limited experiments with Multilaterism, and, after the passing of the 1944 Act, which made no mention of three types of secondary school, the Ministry of Education, while clearly leaning towards the tripartite system of secondary schooling in its pamphlet "The New Secondary Education," did not veto the starting of Comprehensive or Multipurpose Schools by certain Local Education Authorities on an experimental basis. The London County Councils in their famous "London School Plan" gave a bold lead in opting for such schools to promote "a healthy mutual regard and understanding between persons of different ability with far-reaching effects on the cultural, industrial and commercial life of the Nation, and on the social life of its people," and, inspired by the same objective, Coventry, Birmingham and North Wales followed their lead. But the majority of the L.E.A. opted for the tripartite organisation as the basic secondary school pattern, while experimenting with various types of bi-lateral schools, Grammar-Technical or Technical-Modern or Grammar-Modern. At present there are 61 Comprehensive or Multilateral Schools in England; they form a small but vocal vested interest. The overall pattern of the organization of secondary education, however, remains predominantly tripartite, but is moving towards a greater degree of comprehensiveness over the country as a whole, and the attitude of the Ministry of Education has also thawed considerably in the past twenty years towards the whole Comprehensive or Multilateral experiment.

The attitude of the leading Teachers Associations towards this



new type of secondary school organization is also not without interest. The N. U. T., the largest of all teachers organisations in England, which represents all categories and types of teachers while not in favour of Comprehensive or Multilateral Schools for all children, has given experiments with such schools its whole-hearted support and has recently published an interesting up-to-date and informative survey of it entitled "Inside the Comprehensive School." The Incorporated Association of Assistant Masters have similarly expressed themselves opposed to Comprehensive Schools as a general principle while endorsing limited experiments. Similar views have been expressed by the Head Mistresses and Assistant Mistresses with special regard to Girls' Schools.

In a nutshell, the Comprehensive or Multilateral School in England, having evolved over a period of years, and having passed the test of time, has arrived, and successfully staked its claim to be acknowledged by serious educational administrators, teachers, pupils and the public at large as an alternative type of secondary school organization to the traditional tripartite system. It is therefore befitting that we should study more closely the entire organization and working of these schools in as much detail as possible, so that we may draw suitable lessons from them to guide, illumine and inspire our own infant multipurpose experiment.

Two facts must be stressed at the very outset. The first is that the Comprehensive or Multipurpose School is not regarded as the only, or even the ideal form of secondary school organization in England, but as one among many organizational patterns that will enable Local Education Authorities in England to provide secondary education for all adolescents living in the area under their jurisdiction. Secondly, while the English Comprehensive and Multilateral Schools have been accepted by informed educational opinion in the country as having justified their existence, they are still conceived as being very much in the experimental stage. Both these points are made very clear by the recent Report of the National Advisory Council for Education in England (The Crowther Report, 1960). "Any judgements," says this report, after a careful examination of the achievements of those schools, "of the English Comprehensive Schools at this stage must be made in faith rather than in knowledge. No English Comprehensive school has

yet completed a 6th Form Course with pupils, who, joining at 11, have spent the whole of their secondary life in a Comprehensive school, and fewer of the schools have yet completed a fifth year on this basis. It is impossible therefore to form a valid opinion about the pupils....."

"At present, therefore, the only sensible attitude towards this Comprehensive school seems to be a non-dogmatic one which neither condemns them unheard nor regards them as a prescription of universal application." Thirdly, there is no standard or uniform pattern for the Comprehensive or Multilateral School laid down by the Ministry of Education or any Local Education Authority to which all such schools are obliged or even expected to conform; each such school is given a fairly free hand to develop a pattern of organization, a life and individuality of its own; and in point of fact, there is no such entity as a typical Comprehensive or Multilateral School in England. The first principles enunciated above are considered essential preconditions for the successful working of the Comprehensive and Multilateral Schools in England.

We would be well advised to keep them clearly in view in India where we appear to be running contrary to all three. For, firstly, it appears to be our professed, ultimate objective to convert all Secondary Schools in India into Multipurpose schools, contrary to the recommendation of the Mudaliar Commission which suggested such schools as one, but not the only possible solution on progressive lines. Secondly, there is a tendency to regard the Multipurpose Schools in India as an accomplished educational fact, when it is really at a still more incipient and formative stage of its development than its counterparts in England. And, thirdly, there is a strong tendency on the part of the Central and State Governments to lay down a standard pattern of Multipurpose Schools to which all such schools must conform thus regimenting them and precluding that degree of flexibility, individuality and vitality that is the lifeblood of any educational experiment. These three noticeable and undesirable trends in the evolution of our Multipurpose School should, in our considered opinion, be arrested and reversed if the experiment is to have any chance of being a real and lasting success.

There is, as we stated earlier, no such thing as a typical English



Comprehensive and Multilateral School. The existing schools in both categories differ widely in their location, origin, growth, size, pupil population, internal administration, curriculum, methods, staffing, and the degree of success with which they are functioning.

Comprehensive or Multilateral Schools are found both in large industrial towns like London, Birmingham or Coventry, and in the rural areas of Middlesex or North Wales. They differ in design and size from the magnificent newly built "School palaces" in London which accommodate over 2,000 pupils, to the more modest schools of Anglesey for 1,000 pupils, which is widely regarded as the minimum roll strength for such schools if they are to function satisfactorily.

Comprehensive or Multilateral Schools differ considerably in origin and history and in the areas they serve. Some grew up round the nucleus of a well-established Secondary Grammar or Central School; others were formed by combining two or more adjacent schools into a single administrative unit; still others were started *de-novo* in magnificent new buildings specially designed to house them. Some cater for urban or rural areas formerly served by separate Grammar, Technical, and Modern Schools, others the new towns and housing estates that are being built up on the periphery of large towns like London or Birmingham. The "catchment area" of some is limited to a well defined district; in other cases they are permitted to recruit a certain percentage of their pupils from other contiguous areas within a well defined radius. Comprehensive or Multilateral Schools also differ in their student population. Some schools take all secondary school pupils who formerly went to segregated Grammar, Technical, or Modern Schools in their area; others are deprived of a certain percentage of the Grammar School stream who may opt to go to a nearby Grammar School rather than join the Comprehensive or Multilateral School. Generally speaking, however, in the words of one of the Heads of those schools, "it is important to remember that the Comprehensive School is not just another form of secondary education. By its very nature it is the whole of secondary education carried out under one roof. Its pupils are, therefore, a cross-section of the population of the district. Thus the school contains pupils who can successfully follow an academic or technical course to the highest limit, eventually leading to the



University, and those whose academic ability is strictly limited, but who can, nevertheless, benefit by properly organized courses. Between these two limits, there is wide variety of pupils with differing ranges of ability who have to be trained to take the rightful place in the country when their school days are over."

The professed objective of the Comprehensive or Multilateral School is "the provision of a well-rounded and many-sided education in an atmosphere of social unity" for its heterogeneous school population. To devise a suitable administrative solution to this complex problem is no easy task and such schools naturally differ in their approach to this vexed question. Many adopt the Multilateral pattern with clearly defined Grammar, Technical, and Modern sides, and some further 'stream' the three groups of pupils on the basis of ability and aptitude. In Comprehensive schools organized on the Multilateral pattern, therefore, while all levels of ability are present in the same school, they are not in the same class, such schools provide a common social life for all pupils not a uniform curriculum. In the other Comprehensive Schools segregation of pupils into different groupings on the basis of ability is also the common practise unlike that obtaining in American Comprehensive schools where the climate of opinion is against segregation either into different schools, or, in the same school, into different ability 'sides' or groups. "A Comprehensive School," according to the Crowther Report, "is one which at the age of eleven takes, pupils of all ranges of ability. Once inside the school, however, there is no attempt (as there is in a typical American High School on which the English Comprehensive School is often mistakenly thought to be modelled) to teach all grades of ability together. The pupils are placed in forms or sets according to their ability—as a typical Comprehensive Schools will start with 8-15 forms in a single year—and those who can move fast are not held back by the others. It is in social matters, in games and extra curricula activities that this ability-ranges are grouped together, not in studies." Ability grouping is the rule rather than the exception in English Comprehensive Schools, but in some schools pupils are kept in mixed ability forms throughout or in subject and activities like Religious Instruction, Art, Music, P.T., Craft, etc. but are re-grouped into 'sets' on the basis of ability in key subjects like English, Mathematics, Science and foreign



languages. Transfers and promotions in such cases are made both from form to form and set to set. Still other schools use various permutations and combinations of the form, stream and set principles. By a skilful use of such flexible and stimulating organizational devices, Comprehensive Schools claim to mitigate considerably the dangers and heartbreaks associated with the entire Eleven plus selection procedure which imposes such a strain on teachers, parents and children in areas where children are segregated into different types of Secondary Schools on the result of the fateful Eleven plus examination.

The curriculum provided by all Comprehensive or Multilateral Schools, whether organised in 'sides', streams or sets, is of a broadly similar pattern. A "common curriculum," designed to give all adolescents, irrespective of their respective side or stream to set, a sense of their common national heritage of knowledge and culture is provided during the first two or three years. This common core curriculum usually consists of English, Mathematics, Science, History and Geography, Music, Arts and Crafts, Physical Education and Religious Instruction, and, in some schools, a foreign language. This broad-based core curriculum has been planned with three ends in view; the first is to provide a sound general education, a foundation for later specialization; the second is to attempt an accurate assessment of the varying abilities and aptitudes provided; and the third to make children aware of their special talents, thus making possible an informed choice of electives in the later years.

All students in Comprehensive Schools, therefore, pursue a Common Curriculum, broad-based, exploratory and diagnostic in character, for the first three years, and study a mixture of traditional and modern subjects in common. This does not mean that they all cover identical syllabuses by identical methods; such uniformity in content and method is realized clearly by Administrators, Heads and Teachers in Comprehensive and Multilateral Schools in England, to be neither desirable nor possible in view of the wide differences in ability and aptitudes that exist between the most able and the least able children in the schools. Hence though there is a common curriculum, the suggested syllabuses in the subjects included in it can be modified, and explored at varying depths through different approaches, and the teachers are

free to tailor both syllabuses and methods to the varying abilities and aptitudes of their pupils.

This common curriculum for all pupils consisting of English Language and Literature, Mathematics, Science, History, Geography, Arts and Crafts, Physical Education and Religious Instructions continued into the fourth, and, for these pupils who stay on, in the fifth years; but in addition, pupils now select a group of elective subjects which give an academic, technical, commercial, home science or practical bias to their education. These elective groups of subjects are in turn studied for varying lengths of time, at different levels and with various short and long term objectives in view. The academic courses in Art and Science are usually geared to the Advanced level of the General Certificate of Education which leads to the University of professional schools. Technical courses may lead through advanced level work in the school to the University or technological institutes, or at a lower level, to organized apprenticeships, often combined with day-release, and part-time or sandwich courses leading to the national diplomas in applied engineering or technology. Home Science, Commerce and practical courses in general are "life adjustment," general education *cum* vocational courses leading to an apprenticeship or semi-skilled work on leaving school in the appropriate trade or profession. Such courses, which provide vocational training within a frame-work of general education, are taken by the majority of the children in the Comprehensive or Multilateral Schools and are very popular because they make for a core on interest and achievement which can enliven and enlighten all other work, and, only if they are widely diffused, will the nation obtain the technicians and craftsmen it needs. "This co-existence of academic and vocational subjects and activities with the same school, and the explicit acknowledgement of the right or vocational studies to exist in their own right and on equal terms with the more academic subject is striking; it ensures that every child, whether of above average or below average intelligence, has the right and the opportunity of achievements and recognition, whether in Greek or in working a lathe or cooking a meal; and finally, the fact the essential dignity of work well done, whether by a potential scholar or craftsman is recognized, are among the best and most vital features of the English Comprehensive or Multilateral



Schools."

The curriculum of the Multipurpose Schools, as drawn up by the All India Council of Secondary Education, would appear to follow the same broad pattern as their counterparts in the U.K. with its core curriculum to be covered by all pupils, and its elective groups to suit individual abilities and aptitudes. But there are important differences, both in the subjects that encompass the core curriculum and diversified groups, and in the entire approach to the way in which both should be handled. While, for instance, in England each Comprehensive or Multilateral School is relatively free to draw up its own core and elective curriculum within broadly defined limits, in India the pattern is rigid and uniform, and little or no flexibility is permitted.

The subjects that compose the core curriculum also differ. In the U.K. the core consists of English, generally but not always, one foreign language, Mathematics, Science, History and Geography, Music, Art and Craft and Physical Education and Religious Instruction, whereas in India the core consists of the Mother tongue, English and a third Language, Social Studies, General Science, Elementary Mathematics and a Craft. The Indian curriculum therefore contains an extra language, and replaces History and Geography by Social Studies; it, however, omits Music, Art, Physical Education and Religious Instruction which are surely indispensable elements in a vital and well-rounded core curriculum. The elective groups in India also, while on the surface, resembling some of those found in England, differ from the latter chiefly in the fact that the compulsions within the groups are much greater in India than in the U.K. where both the provisions are more generous and the choice of electives is much more flexible. Moreover, the range of choice is much greater so that the individual child in the U.K. has a better chance of being provided with a course tailored to his individual needs than a pupil in a Multipurpose School in India where, usually, the choice is restricted between three well-defined elective groups with little leeway provided for taking optional subjects from more than one group.

But the most important difference between the curriculum of the Comprehensive or (Multilateral) School in India lies in their *raison d'être* and in their method of approach. The prescribed



Multipurpose School curriculum, despite the fact that the Mudaliar Commission strongly recommended that it should provide a terminal education for life for the majority and a University entrance education for a small majority, is in fact almost entirely of a pre-University character. Syllabuses have been also drawn up predominantly with this end in view so that they are excessively academic and overloaded with detail, and their general standard places both the curriculum as a whole and the various subject syllabuses beyond the intellectual reach of the majority of the pupils in our Multipurpose Schools. The fact that the prescribed syllabuses have to be followed to the letter, in the case of both the core and elective subjects, introduces a further element of rigidity into the entire Multipurpose set-up in our country. But, perhaps, the most serious deficiency of the curriculum of the Multipurpose School in India is that all courses, even those with a distinctive vocational bias, are meant to be primarily "cultural," which in practice means that they are excessively theoretical and academic, and little more than lip service is paid to the vocational element. The overemphasis on a rather narrow interpretation of the word "cultural" makes the present Multipurpose School courses not only unpalatable to perhaps the majority of their pupils, but also of little practical value when these pupils leave school and have to earn a livelihood in the world. A truly Multipurpose School, which is endeavouring to serve a representative cross-section of adolescents, must not only provide a few courses, which, while essentially cultural will have a vocational bias, but also many more courses of varied types which, while essentially vocational in the broad sense of the word, will also have a definite cultural content, if it is to cater for the varying abilities and aptitudes of all its pupils. With this end in view, its curriculum and subject syllabuses should be as broad-based, various and flexible as possible; further, the maximum possible freedom should be permitted to the students to choose, from the wide variety of curricula offerings provided by the school, a curriculum tailored to their individual interest, abilities and aptitudes, and the school staff should have latitude to adapt the set syllabuses in the various subjects, in breadth and in depth, to the differential types of levels of intelligence to be found among their pupils.



The success or failure of Comprehensive or Multilateral Schools, it is clearly realized in England, depend even more than in other types of Secondary Schools on the quality of their Heads and staff. Two problems have to be faced with regard to the headships of such schools. The first is that the Head has to be gifted with the right personality and possess deep scholarship. As regards qualifications and experience, he or she has to be familiar with many different branches of knowledge, arts, science, technical home-science, etc. to be able to provide overall leadership and supervision of the different departments in a large Comprehensive or Multilateral School. To find such Heads has proved difficult even in England; the actual Heads chosen in most cases are usually specialists in one type of Secondary School and one subject field, and so find difficulty in doing justice to others where they are on less familiar ground. Again, ideally a Head should not only be familiar with the individual strengths and weaknesses of each member of his staff, he should also endeavour to know, to a greater or less extent, every boy or girl in the school. This is obviously not possible in a large Comprehensive School where the staff usually consists of 50 to 60 teachers, and the pupils number from 1,500-2,000. In such circumstances, can the Head of a Comprehensive or Multilateral School hope to be more than a mere administrator, a distant 'presence' who rules his educational domain from the inner sanctum of his office through the Inter-Com system, and who seldom comes into close and vital contact with the staff and pupils?

Critics of these schools state that this is inevitable, "and since no school is better than its headmaster, we stake the future of too many boys and girls on one man's strength." Its apologists, while admitting the danger of loss of personal contact, claim that foresight, imagination and determination can overcome it, and argue that the Head of a Comprehensive School need not necessarily be a mere administrator, "he can and should be the inspiration and driving force of a great organization, the creator or its ethos and the leader of his colleagues." In actual practice the Heads of these schools are assisted in the work of administration and staff supervision by the Deputy Heads and several Department Heads for the various subjects, and personal con-



tact is maintained with individual pupils through a House system under which each pupil falls under the personal care of a House Master or Assistant House Master so that if the Head cannot know every child intimately himself, he can always find one of his staff who does.

The staff problem in such schools is no less acute and difficult of solution. For a start, experience in England has proved conclusively that Comprehensive or Multilateral Schools need a more generous scale of staffing than separate specialized types of Secondary Schools and few employers are willing to face up to this fact. It has been calculated that if they are to provide all the various courses that are necessary and desirable such schools will need a staff—student ratio of 1:15 which is more generous than is usually permitted to ordinary Secondary Schools. With regard to the quality of the staff members, the Headmistress of Woodberry Down, one of the largest and most up to date London Comprehensive Schools, holds, that they should be well qualified and experienced and possess enthusiasm and a love for teaching; in addition, since these schools are in an experimental stage and have to cater for so many types of children, they should be adaptable and able to adjust themselves to new ways of thinking and acting and to an educational approach very different to the traditional one through talk and chalk; graduates and undergraduates teachers are both needed in Comprehensive or Multilateral Schools, and a variety of specialists for subjects like Art, Music, P. T., Craft, Home Science, Technical subjects, Commerce, etc.

Experience in England during the past ten years has shown it is no easy task for a Head to weld such a large and diverse staff into a real team under his leadership. If a satisfactory Head-Staff relationship is to exist, the Head of a Comprehensive or Multilateral School must not only get to know, on a personal as well as a professional level, each teacher, but enable each teacher to realize that he is not a mere cog in a vast soulless machine but that his contribution to the success of the whole school is known and valued.

This will only be possible, according to English educational opinion, if the Head is prepared to share this vital responsibility with his Deputy and Departmental Heads, and not endeavour to



accomplish this difficult and complex task single-handed.

The task of establishing satisfactory inter-staff relationships and of integrating teachers with different backgrounds, outlooks and subject fields into a unified and collective team has proved difficult in the Comprehensive and Multilateral schools in England; frequent conferences and consultations between individual teachers and the Head or his deputies, and sectional staff meetings of teachers of the different subjects have provided the most promising approach to the solution of this delicate problem of human relations.

The maintenance of discipline in large and complex organizations, such as are the Comprehensive and Multipurpose Schools, would appear to be more difficult than in an ordinary secondary school. But, in point of fact, by the skilful use of a House and Prefect system, the maintenance of satisfactory discipline has not, by and large, proved half as difficult as was envisaged. Problems and pitfalls there are of course, but, by and large, experience in England has proved that, provided there is adequate foresight and planning, such disciplinary problems that crop up are different in degree rather than in kind from those found in other schools, and a study of the etiology of such problems reveals that they can be traced in most cases to conditioning factors in one socio-economic background of the pupils, homes, and the society in which they live, rather than to inherent defects in the Comprehensive or Multilateral School set-up itself.

Personnel problems in the Multipurpose School set-up in India have proved broadly similar to those in the U.K. The difficulty of finding Heads capable of adequately supervising all the streams in a Multipurpose School; of working out a satisfactory devolution of responsibility from the Head to the various departmental heads; of welding a large and diverse staff into a team; of eliminating or toning down departmental rivalries and conflicts; of making each teacher realize his unique role in the smooth functioning of the whole complex organization, and of inspiring them to play that role to the best of their ability—little real thought has been given to these vital problems of human relationships, but there is no doubt they exist in every Multipurpose School, and that upon finding a happy solution to them depends the ultimate success or future of the entire Multipurpose School experiment. It is a



tragedy that in India we have so far tended to concentrate our attention on the material and technical side of Multipurpose School—on buildings, on equipment, on syllabuses, on examinations, and to relatively ignore the human factor that will in the final analysis make or mar the Multipurpose Schools.

The maintenance of discipline in Secondary Schools of all kinds in India is becoming more of a problem daily. While Multipurpose Schools, because they provide an education more suited to the abilities and aptitudes of a larger percentage of their pupils than "traditional uni-lateral Secondary School, have fewer disciplinary problems caused by frustration, yet because of their size and a corresponding impersonality and regimentation, and because they also have a fair proportion of misfits who will not fit into any stream, these schools are finding the maintenance of adequate discipline an extremely difficult task.

Tangible experiences of attempting to give a local habitation and a name to the Comprehensive and Multipurpose idea in actual schools in England has over the past fifteen years brought to light many weaknesses and drawbacks in this type of organization. Some of these were foreseen and are almost inherent in the Comprehensive or Multipurpose organization itself; others were unforeseen, and have cropped up in the working out of the whole scheme.

The smooth functioning of a large, delicately-balanced, complex organization, such as the Comprehensive and Multipurpose Schools inevitably turns out to be, requires that each and every member of the large and diverse staff, teaching and non-teaching (the latter are almost in a way as important as the former), is aware of his contribution to the successful working of the whole machine, is prepared to pull his full weight and to subordinate his private desire and ambition to the good of the whole. The conditions for such devotion and team work are not very propitious in a large Comprehensive School which tends to generate diverse and often conflicting aims and loyalties, and where the overall organization is so vast and complex that individual teachers find it difficult to see and appreciate their special contribution to the common good. There is also a tendency to pull in different directions rather than work harmoniously, and the creation of several posts of "special responsibility" has tended to create a line and staff organization



that increases the distance between the Head and his staff, and tends to make the staff competitors for those plums rather than colleagues in a common enterprise. An outstanding Head should be able to arrest these centrifugal tendencies and weld the various conflicting elements into a true unity in diversity, but, since most Heads are limited by their own previous backgrounds and education and training which generally is "Grammar School," the ideal Comprehensive School Head tends to be a *rara avis*.

In theory the Comprehensive or Multipurpose School is designed to provide every adolescent with a type of Secondary education suited to his age and abilities, and it receives a cross-section of pupils at 11 plus, ranging from those who have just escaped being classified as educationally sub-normal to those who are, near-geniuses. Can and does the average Comprehensive or Multilateral School cater for this very wide range of ability and aptitudes? Very few objective observers would agree that they can do both. Two main criticisms are levelled against them in this connection: the first is that in trying to prove that they can have as big Sixth Forms and secure as many examination successes and open scholarships as Grammar Schools, these schools have tended to concentrate on children of high ability, who number on the averaged 25 per cent of their intake, and to neglect the average and below average children who represent 75 per cent of their annual intake. "The real test of the success of the Comprehensive School," according to an experienced educationist, "lies not in its annual submission of candidates for the General Certificate of Education or for the University, but in catering for those for whom there will not be any examination," and it is this acid test, he adds, in which the Comprehensive School has failed.

The second criticism, which to some degree contradicts the first, is that there is inevitably a lowering of intellectual standards in Comprehensive and Multilateral School. Since the majority of pupils in these schools are average or below average, because of egalitarian pressures, these schools tend to neglect the gifted child, and, as with their counterparts in the U.S.A., there tends to be an overall levelling down of intellectual standards in these schools; all standards tend to be brought down to the common low level; boys who have slight ability tend to lose it, and the clever to suffer. The Comprehensive School, in short, trying to be all things



to all men, tends to satisfy nobody.

The drawbacks listed above are admitted by the more balanced apologists of the Comprehensive or Multilateral School. But they hold that other types of Secondary school organization—the tripartite system, for instance, common in the U.K.—suffer from much graver disadvantages from which Comprehensive Schools are relatively free. Further, they are of the opinion that since the Comprehensive School is not an accomplished fact but a lively, growing organization, many of the present ills to which these schools are heirs to, are in the nature of growing pains which will be considerably alleviated or disappear completely as the child waxes strong and grows into vigorous youth and mature manhood.

The major drawbacks and deficiencies that have emerged in the working out of the Comprehensive or Multilateral idea in practice in England are even more apparent in the working out of the Multipurpose idea in India. The complex task of evolving an administrative set-up in which the Head and the staff work in complete harmony towards the achievement of common, clearly understood, and freely and enthusiastically accepted goals; of establishing parity of esteem and promoting real cooperation and concord between the various streams in the school; and of counter-acting centrifugal tendencies are tasks that still have to be accomplished in the vast majority of Multipurpose Schools in India. Nor do Multipurpose Schools in India endeavour to provide for all their pupils; whether they have three or more streams they are, in point of fact, catering only for a small minority of their pupils who have an above average I.Q., and even these are not benefiting as much as they should because of the dead weight of the others who, at least for as long as they can continue, attempt in vain to cover the same courses as their brighter brothers and sisters.

Comprehensive and Multilateral Schools, it is obvious, have strong as well as weak points. The experience of the past years in England has clearly proved, according to the champions of the Comprehensive School not as its critics described it in a “mere ideological *tour de force*,” it is “a real school in its own right seeking to provide a new and vital approach to secondary education—it may bring social benefits but the essential advantages claimed for the Comprehensive school is its ability to provide educational opportunities for individual abilities and aptitudes; it will seek to give



the best to every child, and encourage him to give of his best." The Comprehensive or Multilateral School by virtue of its planned accommodation, up-to-date and varied equipment, diverse and variously qualified staff, varied programme of co-curricula activities and diverse and many-sided curriculum, and its favourable climate of recognition of all types of talent, can, its apologists hold, provide better and more varied facilities for catering for the developing potentialities of all kinds of adolescents than the single stream type of Secondary School. Such Schools though in practice they may be weighed and found wanting even in this respect, can, it is claimed, cater better for the gifted child by providing a greater variety of offerings in its Sixth Form than Secondary Grammar School. Further they make better provision for the average and below average who do not require a watered-down Grammar School curriculum, but one designed especially to suit their individual abilities and aptitudes. Finally, problems of selection are robbed of their sting in the Comprehensive School, and for late developers—children who at eleven plus seem average or below average and would be relegated to Secondary Modern Schools and who two years later, when it is often too late, reveal marked ability in several directions—these schools have proved a veritable boon.

This unique advantage and function of the Comprehensive Schools in England is highlighted by the Crowther Report. According to the Report these schools have a specialized educational function which is "to show how many of the failures of the educational system can be avoided by finding the right course for each particular pupil. In this respect their specialist role is to play Thesus in the Procrustes of the Tripartite system. One of their great strengths is that it is much easier to change forms than to change schools. It is thus possible to adjust the curricula which a particular pupil is following, if and when the need arises."

Finally, though this point is less stressed today than in the early days, Comprehensive or Multilateral School provide a more diverse and educative school community, comprising as they do a cross-section of the Nation's adolescent population, and they can hope to promote a greater degree of social integration and understanding between different social, cultural and occupational groups than in other types of secondary schools organization based on the principle of segregation. Comprehensive Schools, according to the



Crowther Report, besides a specialized educational role, have a specialized and unique social role. "If it is placed in a suitable neighbourhood it ought to act as a unifying force drawing pupils together at an age when they are otherwise eager to draw apart. In a Comprehensive School the different social backgrounds from which the pupils come and the different kinds and levels of employment to which they are going more closely corresponds to the national pattern. This width of experience within a common life is surely of great value. When a Comprehensive School really commands the loyalty and appreciation of its members it acts as an effective sign of that unity in society which of our age covets." And this promotes social integration.

That the above socio-educational benefits do not exist merely in the minds of theorists, but are visible to children and their parents is proved by the facts that many more pupils in England are staying in Comprehensive Schools of their own free will, after crossing the compulsory school-leaving age of 15, than did formerly under the Tripartite System. Hence the Crowther Commission welcomed the Comprehensive Schools "not as the right place for all seventeen years olds, but as pace setters both in persuading boys and girls to stay longer and in showing how education, though it may divide us intellectually, can unite us socially." Advantages similar to the above should be obtainable in our Multipurpose Schools in theory, though they seldom are in practice.

Weighing the pros and cons of this new type of Secondary School organization so far as England is concerned, a few definite conclusions can be drawn. The Comprehensive or Multilateral Schools of England do not represent, as some imagine, a revolution in the field of Secondary organization; they are the products of, at first a gradual, and since the 1944 Education Act, a more rapid evolution in the theory and practice of Secondary education in England. Many educationists may not agree with the claim that they are the "best expressions of the policy of Secondary Education for all enshrined in the 1944 Act," still, as a workable and dynamic administrative solution to the problem of Secondary education for all, they deserve the serious study of all educational administrators, heads and teachers. There is little doubt that the Comprehensive or Multilateral Schools can meet and are meeting effectively the educational and social challenges of the time, and that



under the dynamic impact of the "Comprehensive idea" the rigid tripartism of the early thirties and forties in the field of Secondary education in England is rapidly breaking up. And though not many Local Authorities are prepared to go the whole way, yet they are, almost without exception, moving towards a greater degree or Comprehensiveness in their administrative provision for secondary education. This is taking the form of a more flexible organisation designed to secure a definite overlap between schools where they have different types of school, or experiments with different forms of Bi-lateralism. Apart, therefore, from the enthusiasts (and these are found in the ranks of both the champions and the critics of the Comprehensive or Multilateral Schools), the majority of thinking administrators, heads and teachers in England would probably agree with Dr. W. Alexander, the General Secretary of the Educational Institute of Scotland, that neither the Tripartite system nor the system of large Comprehensive Schools "constitutes a practical proposition for the whole country." He therefore, recommends a flexible and experimental approach to the vexed problems of the best type of Secondary School organisation in England. Dr. Alexander holds that school organisation is, after all, a means not an end, and therefore "whatever type of organisation is finally decided on, in the final analysis, the important thing is that the organisation should enable all Secondary Schools to be good schools". Judging the Comprehensive School experiment by the above criterion, Dr. Alexander concludes "whether the educational opportunities they provide are greater than those provided by alternative forms of organisation must await future evidence, but it is a thoroughly good thing that the experiment should be made." This is probably the last but one last word can be said of the Comprehensive Schools, the last being said by the Crowther Commission "Comprehensive Schools have the same double jobs as other specialised schools. They exist to set a standard of excellence in their own field, and to the extent to which they achieve it, they influence other schools." What lessons can we in India, who are committed to a large scale, country-wide Multipurpose School experiment draw from the trials and errors, the strengths and the weaknesses, the successes and the failures, the advantages and the disadvantages of the fifteen year old Comprehensive or Multi-



lateral School experiment in the U.K. ?

We have already dealt *pari passu* with the more important lessons to be drawn from the English Multilateral and Comprehensive School, hence we will here only summarise and pin-point our main conclusions.

1. The Comprehensive or Multilateral Schools of England, though the earliest of them have been in existence over the past ten years, are still considered to be in the experimental stage. The experiment is on the whole working out successfully, but it is by no means concluded, and it will be many years before any final conclusions can be drawn.

The Multipurpose School in India, the earliest of which is hardly five years old, are even more so in the early experimental stage, and the sooner educationists all over India realise this fact and stop talking of them, as many are apt to do, as an accomplished educational fact, the better it will be, and the greater will be the chance of this great experiment being a success.

2. A great deal of interest and critical attention has been focussed on the Comprehensive and Multilateral Schools in England and there has been a vigorous and informed controversy about their pros and cons which has brought to light their real strengths and weaknesses. There has also been a good deal of real objective research done to explore their strong and weak points, with a view to consolidating the former and eliminating the latter, and the research continues unabated.

There has been a fair amount of interest and attention on the Multipurpose Schools, but very little of it is informed or critical. Administrators tend to accept these schools as "a good thing" in theory, without any real realization of their many practical difficulties and drawbacks; Heads and teachers are aware of the latter, but afraid to speak up. And very little real research has been done, and is being done with regard to the many practical problems created in these schools or to discover their real strengths and weaknesses.

3. The majority of balanced educational thinkers and administrators in England regard the Comprehensive or Multilateral Schools in their country as a promising, but by no means the only possible form of secondary school organisation in the country. They are convinced that the organisation or Secondary education



in any area cannot be determined in a precise manner once and for all, and that school organisation should be of a flexible and not a fixed character; they also hold that since social and economic factors in various parts of England and Wales are different there can be no supreme and superior plan or scheme for the pattern of secondary school organization which can be introduced throughout the country. Finally, they are convinced from the experience that while types should be an underlying unity in the secondary education of all types provided by any L.E.A., yet different kinds of secondary school provision—separate Grammar, Technical, and Modern Schools, Bilateral, Multilateral, and Comprehensive Schools, can and should exist side by side in the same area without administrative difficulty.

These administrative first principles should be kept in mind in India where there is a strong tendency, despite the Mudaliar Commission, to regard Multipurpose Schools as a panacea for all the ills that have clogged secondary education in India since its inception in the 19th century, and the only form of organisation possible for secondary schooling throughout India. It is the declared policy of the Central Ministry to convert all Secondary Schools into Multipurpose Schools as soon as circumstances permit, and anyone who questions the wisdom of the policy is regarded as a reactionary.

4. In England experiments are being made both with Multilateral and Comprehensive Schools; in India we are committed only to the Multilateral type, though its educational possibilities are more limited than those of the former.

5. English educational thinkers and practitioners are unanimously of the considered opinion that there cannot and ought not to be a standard and uniform pattern for either the Multilateral or Comprehensive Schools, and L. E. A.'s are given, and, in turn, give the Heads and teachers of these schools the maximum liberty to work out, through experiment, their own individual pattern of internal organisation to set their own goals, draw up their own curricula and syllabuses—choose their own text books, and prepare their pupils for whatever school-leaving examination they think fit.

There is in India, on the contrary, a tendency to draw up a standard pattern of Multipurpose School which the Central

Government is trying to impose on the States and which the State departments of education in turn are imposing on the actual schools; very little freedom in internal matters has been left to the actual schools and there is consequently little experiment and research going on in them. Externally imposed examinations, curriculum, syllabuses, methods, text-books, leave little scope for initiative and the breaking of new ground so that the same problems exist in all Multipurpose Schools, and the little attempt is being made in any of them to work towards a solution on them.

6. Multipurpose and Comprehensive Schools in England are trying with varying degrees of success to cater for the abilities and aptitudes of *all* their pupils, the above average, the average and the below average and even the retarded and sub-normal, Multipurpose Schools in India are only concerned with the above average and are turning a blind eye to the others, hence the great wastage in these schools, a problem that does not exist in major proportions in their English counterparts.

7. The problems of the selection and allocation of pupils to the various streams, forms and sets that are found in the Comprehensive or Multilateral Schools in England has been largely solved. We are just beginning to realise the gravity and complexity of this problem in our Multipurpose Schools in India, and to work towards its solution.

8. Comprehensive and Multilateral Schools in England, especially the carefully planned, newly built ones, have all the tools necessary to tackle their difficult and complex task-capable and experimental Heads; a large and diverse and well qualified staff of general practitioners and specialists of all types; a generous staff-student ratio; buildings that are being constructed specially for their particular needs; provision of more than adequate and up-to-date furniture, equipment and audio-visual aids, sympathetic and informed inspection and guidance etc. Our own Multipurpose Schools lack one more of these essential 'tools', and, even where they possess them, the tools are of rather an inferior quality. Unless more tools are provided, especially on the human side, such as will compare favourably with those provided in the U.K., the chances of our Multipurpose Schools being as successful as their counterparts will be slim indeed.



## CHAPTER IV

### THE COMPREHENSIVE SCHOOLS IN THE U.S.A.

To THE diligent student of comparative education, who is primarily interested in the development of the multipurpose pattern of Secondary education all over the world, the system of secondary education in the U.S.A. presents a striking contrast not only to that existing in our country, but also to that existing in the other progressive democracies such as England and France. A foreign observer making a close study of the English and French Secondary School systems is apt to despair at times of ever being able to understand their inherent complexity, or of grasping the precise *raison d'être* and function of a bewildering array of institutions of all kinds providing different varieties of secondary education for different children, institutions which differ considerably in their history, outlook, social status, objectives, curricula, methods, examinations, and in the length, nature and vocational bias of the courses they provide. An earnest attempt to understand the precise differences between Public Schools, Secondary Grammar, Technical and Modern Schools, Multilateral and Comprehensive schools in England, or of Lycees, Colleges, Higher Elementary Schools, Technical Schools, Industrial Schools and Centres in France is indeed a formidable task.

In contrast to the variety and complexity of the system of Secondary education in England and France, or even to that obtaining in contemporary India, the structure of the U.S. educational system appears to be relatively simple, monolithic, and uncomplicated, and, in this respect at least, to have more in common with the educational systems in a totalitarian country like the U.S.S.R. than with those of its fellow Western democracies, or of the new Eastern democracies such as India. In

describing the Secondary school system in England, for instance, one tends to think in terms of Secondary schools of many types, of which Comprehensive or Multilateral Schools are one among many current types of school organization. But so far as the U.S.A. is concerned, one tends to think almost exclusively of the standard pattern of the American High School, the co-educational, comprehensive, Public High School which provides secondary education to the vast majority of American children.

The obvious simplicity of the system of secondary education in the U.S.A. is, however, more apparent than real; for, while the Comprehensive Public High School in the U.S.A. appears to be easier to understand than the variety of Secondary Schools found in England and France, yet it is actually an extremely complex institution to understand and evaluate. The American Comprehensive High School is, in fact, very different not only from the predominant type of orthodox, unilateral, academic secondary school found in India, but even from our newer Multipurpose schools in its genesis and evolution, in its organization, management and control, in its student population, objectives, curriculum and methods of teaching and evaluation; in most of these aspects of its life and work it has broken, to a greater or less extent, with well-established and widespread educational traditions and launched out into new, untried, and, in some cases, slippery paths!

A brief excursion into the history of secondary education in the U.S.A. is essential in order to understand the American Comprehensive High School of today. At its origin secondary education in the U.S.A. was modelled on that in England and was provided in Latin Grammar Schools. Secondary education at this time in the States, as in the 'Mother Country,' was considered to be a type of academic education meant only for a social and financial elite, to prepare them for College and the learned White-collar professions; the masses being provided with elementary education in the Public Elementary Schools. The essentially practical and democratic spirit of the American pioneers, and the inescapable utilitarian demands of a moving frontier, however, soon led the American people to revolt against the educational and social exclusiveness of the Latin Grammar Schools, the products of which were, for the most part, ill-adapted to the practical necessities of



a pioneering age, and, in the 19th century, to the demands of a rapid industrialization. Besides the moment the number of children who wished to continue their education beyond the elementary stage began to increase, slowly at first but with ever increasing rapidity at the dawn of the 20th century, it became very evident that such children could not, and would not be fitted into the Procrustean bed of the narrow, academic, book-centred, College-preparatory education provided by the Latin Grammar School. On all sides the demand began to be increasingly voiced, both on educational and egalitarian grounds, as it is today being increasingly voiced in our own country, for a Common High School which would, as a matter of course, admit all children after they passed out from the Grade or Elementary School, and provide them with a secondary education suited to their individual abilities and aptitudes and vocational ambitions. Since there was an "infinite variety" of such abilities, aptitudes and vocational ambitions, it was obvious that the Common or Public High School would have to provide, within one and the same school, not one but varied types of secondary education to cater for those individual differences. And since education in the U.S.A. is very much a community affair (each local Community providing, controlling and largely financing its own schools in partnership with the State and Federal Governments, which, by and large, interfere as little as possible) in a comparatively short time every local community — there are many thousands of these in the U.S.A. — of any size, importance and financial viability had its own community High School, side by side with its Grade or Elementary School. Further, it became a matter of community pride to make these High Schools as impressive as possible, often at considerable sacrifice, so that in most local communities in the U.S.A. the Public High School is the most striking architectural feature of the landscape and the hub and nerve centre of the educational, social and civic life of the community as a whole. And, further, as the percentage of children attending High Schools has risen from 1 in 10 in 1900 to 8 in 10 in 1960, and as the total population of the U.S.A. has more than doubled during the same period, the American High Schools have not only grown spectacularly in number and size, in a manner which in our own day is being paralleled in our own country, but in the variety and



complexity of the educational problems they have been called upon to solve. The ideal animating secondary education in the U.S.A. today, one that is being increasingly heard in free India, is summed up in the popular slogans "Secondary education for all," "Equality of Educational Opportunity for All," "Equality of status for all types of work," and, what is characteristically American, "Education is Good Business." Every adolescent, according to American socio-educational thinking, has a right to secondary education from 12 to at least 16 — in many States the compulsory school leaving age has been raised to 18 — of a type suited to his abilities, aptitudes and vocational ambitions.

This ideal is very attractive in theory; to translate it into practice, as we are just beginning to realize in India, is extremely difficult. Countries like England and France solve the problem by allocating the children, through a process of natural or artificial selection, on the basis of intelligence and achievement tests and teachers' estimates, to different types of secondary institutions, each with its characteristic objectives, methods, curricula and ethos, where they stay for differing lengths of time, the majority leaving at 15, and the minority at 17 or 18. But this idea of selection and segregation of children into different types of secondary schools, where they are educated over varying lengths of time, is abhorrent to the greater majority of American social and educational thinkers who believe that "equality of educational opportunity" for all American boys and girls at the secondary stage is only possible if they are educated side by side in a common Public High School for roughly the same number of years. Hence, while in many of the larger cities of some American States separate and specialized types of secondary schools are provided on the English and Continental pattern, the distinctive and predominant feature of the secondary education scene in the U.S.A. is the "Comprehensive" High School. This institution, in contrast to "specialized" high schools which admit on a selective basis and offer only one type of curriculum, caters for all boys and girls between the ages of 12 and 16 or 18 of the local community; it endeavours to provide for each individual adolescent a distinctive pattern of secondary education tailored to his or her own individual needs, abilities, aptitudes and vocational ambitions. "The Comprehensive High School which is attended by all the children of all



the people," says Prof. Kandel, "is its response to the American ideal of education in a democracy. It is not only considered educationally more efficient than separate schools, but is regarded as essential for developing a sense of social unity and solidarity." It is significant that the Mudaliar Commission, in recommending the Multipurpose School as a solution to the problem of secondary education for all in India, uses similar socio-educational arguments in favour of it. For, according to the Commission, not only will the Multipurpose School "provide varied types of courses for students with diverse interests and abilities, but it will remove all invidious distinctions between students preparing for different course of studies and make it possible to plan the national system on a truly democratic basis."

The American attempt to cater for all adolescent youth in the same Comprehensive High School is, as is becoming increasingly apparent in our own country, a formidable task; hence in the attempt to discharge its responsibilities, the American High School has acquired a unique and dynamic character over the years, and in its management and control, organization and administration, its objectives and goals, curriculum and courses, its methods of teaching and its means of examination and evaluation, its strengths and its weaknesses, its problems and its attempted solutions, it represents a significant departure from secondary education theory and practice, both in the older and more traditional countries like England and France, and the newer democracies like India or many Far Eastern Countries which have modelled their educational systems largely on English or Continental models.

The pertinent question, "to whom do the schools belong?",—the answer to which in other countries, including ours, is not always simple and straightforward — admits of a reasonably clear-cut answer in the U.S.A. The schools belong to the people; for the people of every local community of suitable size and viability, through their elected representatives on the local School Board and through well organized and vocal Parent-Teacher Associations, provide their own Elementary and High Schools and exercise a considerable measure of very real control over them. It is true that the Federal, and more especially the State Governments, over the past twenty five years have begun to meet over half the running costs of the High Schools, and that the State Department



exercises an appreciable measure of control over the local community High Schools through the "certification" of teachers, prescription of minimum course requirements and kindred matters, and influences them through its expert advice and guidance, but the real control of the Public High School still vests, and is felt to vest with the local community, and especially with parents who have a large say in the running and financing of schools. This right is jealously guarded by the local School Boards who are as quick to resent any attempt at undue interference on the part of State Department of Education these Departments in turn are equally quick to react unfavourably to any attempt on the part of the U.S. Office of Health, Education and Welfare to interfere with their prerogative to order and administer their own educational systems. This system of predominantly local control, and relative autonomy of the local community over its own secondary schools, has no parallel in India, for, even though the majority of secondary schools are under private ownership, the degree of State control over them is considerable, and is increasing daily. The actual planning and building of the local Public High School, the raising of the necessary finance for its construction, the hiring and firing of its staff, the prescription of its curriculum, and its day-to-day control and management, therefore, subject to minimum regulations laid down by the State Department, rests with the local School Board and the local Superintendent of Schools, who is the Board's chief executive officer. Within the limitations of a minimum basic code of regulations framed by the State Department of Education (a code that bears little resemblance to the detailed and minute Codes of Education Departments in India), and the expert advice and suggestions tendered by it from time to time, they are free to teach what they like, as they like it, in their High Schools.

It might reasonably be concluded that such a high degree of local autonomy would lead to a bewildering variety in the High Schools in the U.S.A., not only between State and State but also within the boundaries of the same State. Actually, while there is a healthy variety and many noticeable differences between individual High Schools, there is also a surprising degree of uniformity, at least in major respects, between a High School in one part of an American State and another, and between a High School in



one State and those of the other forty nine. This does not mean that High Schools in the U.S.A. resemble each other to the same extent as do Lycees in France, the Grammar Schools in the U.K., or our own one-track High Schools in India, for the American High School is not conditioned by a common public external examination as are the latter; nor does it mean that all High Schools, as they tend to do in India, conform to a standard pattern. The differences between the High Schools of one local community and that of another, either in the same or in another State, are not infrequently very real. Nevertheless, there is such a thing as a "typical" American High School, in the sense that an American High School would be an easily recognizable entity if placed alongside a typical English or French or Indian High School. To quote Dr. James Bryant Conant, former President of Harvard and one of America's foremost educational theorists, "Though generalization about American public education is highly dangerous, I believe it is accurate to state that a high school accommodating all the youth of a community is typical of American public education. I think it is safe to say that the Comprehensive High School is characteristic of our society."

The three main objectives of an American High School, to quote Dr. Conant once again, are "first to provide a general education for all the future citizens; second to provide good elective programs for those who wish to use their acquired skills immediately on graduation; third to provide satisfactory programs for those whose vocations will depend upon their subsequent education in a college or university." To achieve these three often conflicting objectives, the American High School has developed a well-nigh unique pattern of internal organization and administration. The characteristic Public High School in the U.S.A. is a co-educational Comprehensive High School, offering both general and vocational education of all kinds and admitting almost all the boys and girls of the locality over the age of 12, unlike the characteristic pattern in England, France and India, where, as a result of a process of natural selection, or, on the basis of selection tests, children at eleven or twelve plus are allocated to different types of secondary schools.

England also has her Comprehensive Schools and Multilateral Schools in some areas; English schools of this type usually 'stream'



the children on entry, or soon after, into three or more streams on the basis of ability and aptitude, and often have clearly defined and segregated "Grammar" "Technical" and "Modern" sides. But in the U.S.A., not only is the climate of opinion strongly against the segregation of pupils into different types of schools, but the average American High School will not even stream the students into 'ability groups'. Instead, therefore, of framing three to seven broad patterns of secondary education, as has been done by the protagonists of our Multipurpose Schools and fitting the children into one or the other, the American Comprehensive High Schools make a real effort to make the curriculum fit the child, and not vice versa, by endeavouring to provide an education tailored to his individual needs, abilities, aptitudes and vocational ambitions. Hence the average American Comprehensive High School is much more truly Comprehensive than either the English Comprehensive|Multilateral Schools or our own Multipurpose School which also segregate children into three or more streams.

This attempt to offer an individual, customer-tailored, pattern of secondary education to every boy and girl between the ages of 12 and 17 at a time when over 80 per cent of the adolescent population is in school, and when, because of a radical change in the outlook concerning the employment of youth, they have to be kept till 17 or 18, has created tremendous educational problems that in a few years will be facing us in India. And the attempt to find a solution to them has taxed the ingenuity and professional skill of American educational administrators to the fullest extent during the past decade or two. Since these millions of boys and girls, rich and poor, clever and dull, represent an infinite variety of interests, needs, abilities and aptitudes and vocational ambitions, and because relatively few were fitted for it, the traditional academic secondary school curriculum had to be extended and widened considerably, and a wide range of courses, mostly vocational, and in varying degrees supplementary and alternative to it, had to be provided. In this dynamic process, age-long, traditional subject barriers were broken down, and well-established subjects were divided into new "Courses" (English was broken down into Literature, Composition and Grammar, Journalism, Public Speaking, Dramatics, etc.) In addition to academic Courses, artistic and aesthetic (Art, Music, Glee Club,



Orchestra), practical and vocational (Woodwork, Architecture, Home Economic, Typewriting), and physical (Health, Personal Hygiene, Beauty Culture), and ad hoc utilitarian (Driver Education) courses were added, so that today the catalogue of the average Comprehensive High School in the U.S.A. resembles that of a U.S. Department Store. Many of them offer over a 100 "Courses" from which the average student, during his four years in the High School (Grades IX to XII), studies at least 16 Courses, 4 Courses, each for one hour a week per year, in which he must secure suitable grades to 'graduate' with a High School diploma. The present position is aptly summed up by Prof. Robert Hutchins, the famous ex-president of Chicago University, "The High School is no longer a place where pupils prepare for College, it offers instruction in a multitude of subjects that are supposed to be valuable to young people and to the community."

The multitude of elective "Courses" provided in a large Comprehensive High School in the U.S.A. is bewildering to a foreign observer. But this wide variety of courses tends to fall into two broad categories. First, there are courses which are to develop skills marketable on graduation, commonly called vocational courses; these tend to be geared to local employment needs and possibilities so that a boy who wishes to become a motor mechanic or a farmer, or a girl who wishes to serve as a stenographer or a salesgirl, will find courses that will develop the particular skills he or she needs to enter their chosen professions. And as on leaving school, such students will also share the common vocation of citizenship, they will also take certain general education courses and join in various co-curricular activities aimed to develop their personalities and to train them in the skills of good citizenship so that on leaving school they will be equipped to be good men, good workers, and good citizens. Such boys and girls can either start work on leaving High School, or go to College for further education and training in their respective professions.

The second kind of elective programme offered is the academic, College-preparatory one, taken by able boys and girls who plan to go to College to prepare for entry into the learned professions. Such a programme generally includes advanced Mathematics, Science and foreign languages. These students will also, in addition to their elective courses, take general education courses with



the former group, and participate with them in student government and co-curricular activities with a view to develop qualities of leadership and good citizenship.

This attempt to provide for the abilities and aptitudes not only of the minority of High school students who intend to go to College, but also for the majority who will seek work after graduation from High School, makes the American Comprehensive School very different from our own Multipurpose School. For though the Mudaliar Commission envisaged that these schools should provide a terminal and life entrance variety of secondary education for the majority of the pupils, and a College-preparatory type for a minority, in actual fact syllabuses, curricula, methods and objectives in our Multipurpose School have all been determined in the light of College-entrance rather than life-entrance requirements. Since, above all, every adolescent boy and girl, irrespective of their individual vocations, must also be made into a good American citizen, American Comprehensive High Schools demand a few 'required Courses,' as our new Higher Secondary pattern requires certain 'core subjects,' common to all students to initiate them into the American way of life and to train them to be good American citizens. These 'required courses,' (unlike our own heavy core of seven compulsory subjects, including 3 languages) are relatively few, and usually include courses in English Composition, Social Studies and American History, Physical Education and some Elementary Mathematics and Science. Such 'required courses' constitute approximately one-third of the High School curriculum in the States; the remaining two-thirds of the curriculum is chosen on an individual basis by each boy and girl in consultation with trained Guidance Consultants who are attached to each school.

Every child in an American Comprehensive High School accordingly has to study a compulsory core curriculum of "Common learnings to prepare for effective living," plus elective courses suited to his own individual needs and interests, abilities, aptitudes and vocational ambitions, just as every High School student under the new pattern of Secondary education in India will have to study certain core subjects and certain elective subjects. This subtle and varied blending of certain "common learnings" and elective multiple special 'offerings' is the characteristic feature of the curriculum



of the Comprehensive High School in the U.S.A., as it will soon be in our country, though the balance as between the core and elective subjects will be very different. Another distinguishing feature of the curriculum in an American Comprehensive High School is the fact that, to quote Dr. James Bryant Conant, "over and above the diversities of subject matter, the curriculum is conceived of as an initiation into a particular way of life; and the school is organized to be a working model of democracy. Training in active citizenship is a part of the daily routine"; and the allied fact that co-curricular activities, which cut across future vocational aims and thus further social solidarity, and which play a much more important part in an American than in an English or French High School, are conceived of as an integral part of the curriculum and find a permanent place on the typical U.S. Comprehensive High School Time Table. Every attempt is made through this total curriculum to educate every boy and girl to be a good American citizen, and to develop whatever individual talents they may possess to the fullest extent so that they may be "equipped to live democratically with satisfaction to themselves and profit to society as home makers, workers and citizens." This socio-democratic aspect of High School education is still in its infancy in India.

In theory, each and every American High School student is provided with an individual, customer-tailored curriculum; in practice, the hundred or more courses found in an American Comprehensive High School are usually grouped into certain broad categories, conditioned to a large extent by the famous Prosser Resolution at the N.E.A. Convention in 1946 which stated that approximately 20% of all American Youth could and should be prepared for College, 20% for skilled vocations, and the remaining 60% provided with a type of "life adjustment" education and training. This Convention went on to point out that while the potential College and vocational students were comparatively well catered for in the average American Comprehensive High School, through "College preparatory" and "Vocational courses" of various kinds, the remaining 60% tended to be neglected and needed the very special attention of American educators. Since this famous N.E.A. Convention in 1946 highlighted this lacuna, there has been such attention focussed on the

educationally underprivileged 60%, and a variety of new courses and groupings have been introduced into the Comprehensive High Schools to cater for them through various "Life adjustment" programmes, the addition of which has made much more truly "comprehensive" than they were before.

In more recent years, after the publication of the Educational Policies Commissions historic report on "Education for Life Adjustment," this idea of "Life Adjustment education" has been more broadly interpreted to include all American boys and girls between 12 and 17, and, as a result, considerably more stress began to be placed on the "common learnings" than on the specialised options in American High School. These "common learnings", which were held to be essential for all adolescent boys and girls of High School age, were re-defined by the Educational Policies Commission in a later Report on "Education for All American Youths" which provides the latest and fullest definition of the goals and objectives of secondary education for all in the U. S. A.

Comprehensive High School education, according to the Commission, must cater for the following needs of every adolescent boy and girl in the States.

1. The need to develop saleable skills.
2. The need to maintain good health and physical fitness.
3. The need to understand the rights and duties of a democratic society.
4. The need to understand the significance of the family and the conditions conducive to successful family life.
5. The need to know how to purchase and use goods and services intelligently.
6. The need to understand the methods of science, the influence of science upon human life and the main scientific facts concerning the nature of the world and of men.
7. The need for opportunities to cultivate and appreciate beauty and literature, art, music and nature.
8. The need to be able to use leisure well, balancing activities that yield satisfaction to the individual with these that are socially important.
9. The need to develop respect for other persons, to gain



an insight into ethical values and principles, and to be able to live and work cooperatively with others.

10. The need to grow in ability to think rationally, to express thought clearly, and to read and listen with understanding.

A common education to meet the above needs was held to be essential to equip all American youth to live democratically, "with satisfaction to themselves and profit to society as home makers, workers and citizens."

In India the Mudaliar Commission has also stressed the need for Secondary education to meet certain common needs of all students in Multipurpose and other types of Secondary Schools, particularly its need to develop "those values, attitudes and qualities of character which will enable them to bear worthily the responsibilities of democratic citizenship, and counteract all these fissiparous tendencies which hinder the development of a broad, national and secular outlook". Coming down to more specific term, the Commission went on to particularise that Secondary schools in India must equip all their students to be good citizens of a secular democratic republic, to develop all round personalities and leadership qualities and self discipline, and finally, to train them to be effective in some vocation. The Mudaliar Commission envisaged that these "common learnings" would be provided by the total curriculum of the school in general, and by the core subjects and activities in particular.

The strong emphasis in the U.S.A. on "common learnings" and "life adjustment" education for all American Youth led to a progressive watering down of the individual elective elements and there was as a result an all-round levelling down of standards of achievement which even affected the "College preparatory" which were meant for America's intellectual elite. The launching of the Russian Sputnik, and the belated realisation that the U.S.S.R. was concentrating more on her intellectual elite than on her masses led to a much needed reaction, and there is now much greater emphasis on the elective elements in the curriculum, and on special courses meant to discover early and extend fully the special talents and abilities of the able and gifted children in the states.

Every pupil in an American Comprehensive High School has, as we have stated before, to complete certain "required courses"



and certain elective courses. In other countries, as in ours, the award of a High School diploma is usually conditional on the pupils passing a public external examination, of a suitable, uniform standard. Such a system of external examination, according to American educational theory and practice, would hamstring the schools, and prevent the majority of their pupils from "graduating" from High School and proceeding, if they so wished, for further education. In view of a situation where almost all children of secondary school age are at a common Comprehensive High School, and where the doctrine of "equality of educational opportunity" tends to be equated with "identity of opportunity", it is felt that the majority of students in any High School, and not a small minority as in other countries, should be able to 'graduate' with a High School diploma. In order to make this possible the Americans have, except in New York State, done away with public external examinations at the High School stage altogether, leaving each Comprehensive High School free to virtually set its own standards and award its own diploma, so that to quote Prof. Hutchins "except for those who plan to enter College, it is impossible to say what a High School curriculum is, or what standard each individual diploma holder has attained." In the High Schools themselves, the evaluation of a student's 'fitness to graduate' with a High School diploma is accomplished by a uniquely American device — the Unit and Credit system. This system works as follows. Every Comprehensive High School offers a large number of units or courses, of which a few are 'required' and the majority optional. During the last period of years in Grades IX to XII a student is at High School (some States provide an Eight Year Elementary School followed by a Four Year High School; others follow the 6-3-3 plan, six years in Elementary School, followed by three years Junior High School, and 3 years Senior High School education, generally taken at the same High School) he chooses four major 'Courses' which he studies one hour a day for the whole year. At the end of the year, after an internal test given by the teacher of the Course, if he secures a sufficiently good grade in any or all the Courses chosen by him, he is awarded a corresponding number of 'Credits'. If and when, at the end of four, or perhaps five years, he has collected the required number of 'Credits', he is declared to have



'graduated' and is publicly presented with his High School Diploma at an impressive Graduation Ceremony.

While in some States the number of 'Credits' given for the various Courses varies with the difficulty of the respective courses — a Course in Science, Maths, or Composition may count for a full Credit, others in Dramatics or Driver education may only count half a Credit-in many of the States in the U.S.A. every course, irrespective of its difficulty or cultural content, is given equivalent credit rating so that a Course in Latin or Trigonometry or Literature has the same 'Credit' value as one on Physical education, Public Speaking and Glee Club! And, since individual teachers in the High School set and mark the graduating examinations, there is a great variety in the standards demanded by them due to variations in their ability, as teachers and examiners. Hence, apart from the 'required' courses, (and even these may be taken at different levels), there may be little in common between the education received by two High School 'graduates' graduating from the same Comprehensive High School together: and, according to Prof. Hutchins, quite a few American students 'graduate' without receiving a real High School education as the term is understood in most countries, including our own.

The American system of examination and evaluation gives the American Comprehensive School a degree of liberty that would appear to verge on license. Our own system of public High School examinations, with their rigid regulations and syllabuses, on the other hand, impose a degree of control over the objective, curricula and methods of the School that savours of regimentation and domination and is stifling and oppressive. And, paradoxically, the net result of the excessive libertahianism of the American system and the excessive regimentation of our own, is equally disastrous; both systems often produce High School 'graduates' of such a low calibre that if a system of education is to be judged by its products, both systems, weighed in the balance, are deficient. The answer to our public examination-rid system of secondary education is therefore not to be found in the abolition of public examinations as in America, but in the reform of our entire system of evaluation.

The vital role of educational and vocational guidance in the American High School, in view of their "infinite variety" of

courses and the possible permutations and combinations among them, and the facility of its system of evaluation is apparent. "Clearly", to quote Dr. Conant, "one very crucial aspect of the whole programme is the problem of getting the right students into the right courses, either academic or non-academic. This is the duty of the guidance counsellor whose very important job is to help a student decide, on the basis of aptitude testing, past performance and interest, what kind of elective programme he will take in addition to the required courses". Guidance Counsellors are therefore indispensable in every American High School and are important members of the staff.

In India the Mudaliar Commission also high lighted the crucial importance of educational and vocational guidance in the Multipurpose School, devoting a whole chapter of their report to this important new aspect of secondary education in our country and to the type of education and training that should be given to Teacher Counsellors and to drawing up a minimum guidance programme for Multipurpose Schools.

Methods of teaching in American Comprehensive Schools oscillate between the formal "repetition" approach, whereby a student is set a certain portion of a set Text-book to study per day and has to reproduce its contents orally or in writing, or a teacher delivers a traditional "talk & chalk" lesson, (methods which still dominates our own High School teaching) to the activity approach advocated by Dewey and Kilpatrick and the members of the Progressive Education Association of the U.S.A. by which the entire syllabus is divided into a series of projects or units of study which are covered co-operatively by the pupils and their teachers. Most American Comprehensive High Schools, however, as in the case with the more progressive Higher Secondary Schools in India, try to strike a happy mean between traditional academic and modern activity methods, and since the range of intelligence in a class is usually much greater than in other countries, due to automatic promotion and absence of selection or streaming of any kind, the good Comprehensive High School teacher usually has to use a combination of class, group and individual methods to achieve the greatest measure of success with his pupils.

There are, as was stated before, no public external examina-



tions in the U.S.A., except in New York State, at the High School level. Each High School is therefore free to conduct its own examinations, set its own qualifying standards, and graduate its own pupils at the end of their High School career. Examinations are usually of the objective and standardised type which are being increasingly advocated in India, rather than the traditional essay type, and instead of marks students are generally given grades. Standards are generally lower than in comparable High Schools in other progressive countries, (this is admitted by most American educators), but probably not lower than our own deplorably low standard.

The defects of such a system of Comprehensive education which "accepts lower standards for the sake of a widely diffused education", interpreting High School education in quantitative rather than qualitative terms, and which tends to apply an egalitarian rather than an educational yardstick to judging the worth and value of a High School, are apparent and have come in for an increasing battery of criticism, especially in recent post-Sputnik years.

Absence of uniform and uniformly high standards; the placing on a basis of equality of the well-established academic disciplines with the newer mushroom vocational courses; the equivalent credit-rating given to courses of widely differing intrinsic merit; and the more or less free choice given to students in their choice of "Courses" has led to a marked deterioration of quality and a watering down of standards, so that an American Comprehensive School graduate is acknowledged, even by the U.S. administrators, to be at least two year's behind his English or European counterpart. In such a system the average child tends to be taken as the norm; the tendency is always towards devitalising of initiative and somewhat colourless mediocrity, and the more able are neglected because the clever child can usually get by with the minimum of effort as he is not adequately stretched by the quality of the work being done in school. Further, the majority of American Comprehensive High School students, because of the equal credit rating of all courses, tend to opt for the "seft options" and to avoid the more difficult but more rewarding courses like Science and Maths, with the result that the U.S.A. has recently found that not only is she far be-



hind the U.S.S.R. in her output of scientists and technologists, but that the general quality of its High School education is inferior in many respects to that of other progressive countries.

Another major defect of the American system of secondary education, as provided in her Comprehensive High School, is that it tends to be excessively utilitarian and vocational in its outlook and content. In most other countries the cultural element in secondary education rightly takes precedence over the vocational; in the U.S.A. because only a minority of students in the average Comprehensive High School opt for "academic" or "cultural" courses, and the majority for courses that will provide them with "saleable skills" on leaving the High School, vocational objectives tend to predominate and academic traditions to be soft-pedalled. To quote Dr. Robert Hutchins once again, "Subjects not obviously designed to accomplish such objects are not highly interesting to the students or the public, though they may be tolerated as amiable academic eccentricities. They are remote from life. Preparation for the common calling of manhood, or even of democratic citizenship cannot compete with the golden glitter of courses which are believed to lead directly to proficiency in some occupation".

A third defect of the American Comprehensive High School is its over-emphasis on co-curricular activities, especially on competitive games and various social activities, which tend to loom much larger on the mental horizon of the average Comprehensive High School student in America than his studies in class, and absorb more of his time and energies than his books, thus leading to a loss of balance and quality in his total education and to weaken considerably the influence of the home on the adolescent. The end result of the above deficiencies of the Comprehensive High School were summed up by an expert Harvard Committee which reported "we find clear evidence of wasteful duplication of barren work; we find important gaps in training and intellectual experience. Most serious of all we find students who do not do as well as they ought". And more recently the influential Educational Policies Association in its report "Education for All American Youth" reported that a very large percentage of American youth in secondary schools



was not getting a suitable education, and hence were dropping out before graduation.

The popular American belief that the Comprehensive High School is educationally more efficient than separate schools is therefore not so sound as it appears to be, and though the vast majority of American communities still prefer the Comprehensive High School, the practice is growing in large American cities of providing secondary education in different types of specialised High Schools as is done in England and France.

Nor is the American claim that the Comprehensive High School removes social class distinctions and promotes greater social homogeneity, fully tenable, as Warner, Loes and Havinghurst demonstrated in their well known book "We shall be Educated"? And after remarking that such distinctions enter into and influence every form of activity in the American Comprehensive High School, Prof. Kandel soberly concludes "the assumption underlying the Comprehensive High School that social understanding and elimination of social class differences would result from the mingling of all pupils in the same school has not proved to be valid". Further, the average Comprehensive High School is too large, the personal factor often watered down and the school tends to become like a factory using assembly-line methods and techniques to achieve its results.

How far do these characteristics defects of the American Comprehensive High School exist, or to what extent are they likely to be found in our own Multipurpose Schools.

Our present High School system, dominated by external examinations, does produce a more or less uniform standard among those who graduate from it, but it is uniformity of a low standard, and a standard that appears to be falling lower every year as the quality of the candidates deteriorates due to a variety of circumstances. The upgrading of Multipurpose Schools to Higher Secondary standard is intended to raise the standard of the final leaving examination to that existing in England and on the Continent, and it is sincerely hoped that this will take place. But, despite the model syllabuses and the expenditure of vast sum of money on providing new buildings to make possible the raising of standards in the Higher Secondary Multipurpose School, the net result has not been all that was hoped for; this is mainly due



to overcrowded classes and a tremendous dearth of qualified, devoted and enthusiastic teachers without whom the dry bones of the new syllabuses and curriculums will never be quickened into life or clothed with flesh blood and vitality. Standards have undoubtedly risen in the Multipurpose Schools, but it will be some-time, (and perhaps never, unless the critical qualitative and quantitative teacher—shortage situation is met) before the standard of our Multipurpose Schools is on a par with those in the U. K. or on the Continent.

In the American Comprehensive Schools, according to Dr. Conant, "more than half the students terminate their full time education at graduation, and therefore a variety of programmes are offered". If these American schools tend to place undue emphasis on vocational and utilitarian programmes of preparation designed to equip the majority of their pupils with "saleable skills" on leaving school, at the expense of high level academic and college preparatory courses and the inculcation of cultural values our own Multipurpose Schools are tending to the opposite extreme of attempting to rid themselves of any taint of vocationalism. The Mudaliar Commission was at pains to emphasise that the purpose of even apparently vocational option like Technical, Agriculture, Home Science was not vocational in the narrow sense of the term, but cultural in the broadest sense, since these courses had a cultural discipline of their own which could develop the whole man as much as the Humanities or the Science options. This warning against a narrow vocationalism and insistence on the cultural elements of these broadly vocational courses was based on sound theory, but any fears that the Mudaliar Commission may have had in this respect were really baseless in the light of the excessively academic tradition and outlook of our Secondary Schools. In point of fact, the vocational element in the ostensibly vocational courses has been watered down to such an extent that they are as academic as the Humanities and Science Courses. Their cultural content also leaves much to be desired as a preparation for College, so that these courses are neither a good preparation for College, nor do they fit those taking them for entry into the particular vocation for which they are supposed to prepare him. And the Commission did envisage that the majority of pupils taking these vocational courses would



be those for whom the Higher Secondary stage would be a terminal stage in their education, equipping them, after a suitable apprenticeship, to earn their living in the vocation of their choice.

The wastage in American Comprehensive Schools, caused by large numbers who "drop out" from their schools because they are not being provided with a type of secondary education suited to their individual abilities and aptitudes, is likely to be considerably aggravated in our own Multipurpose Schools. In the High Schools it is estimated that of every 100 boys who start in Class VI only 50 reach Class X, and only 25 of these matriculate successfully, despite the low standards of the present Secondary School leaving examinations. With the raising of the Higher Secondary School-leaving certificate standard, and the considerable strain imposed by the new pattern of Core and elective subjects in the last three years of schooling, the present wastage of 75% of the pupils between Class VI & Class X is likely to be further increased. Even if this does not happen, due to the provision of better teaching and more varied facilities in the Multipurpose School, still the problem of providing a type of secondary education suitable for perhaps 60-75% of the students of these schools will continue to be one of its chief headaches, and, in the considered opinion of the authors, the finding of a suitable solution to this burning problem will make all the difference between the success and failure of the entire Multipurpose experiment in this country.

The failure of the American Comprehensive School to iron out social differences between its pupils will, in all probability, be paralleled in our own country, for no school system can by itself eliminate such differences till they disappear from the society outside its walls. On the other hand, the overemphasis of the American Comprehensive School on co-curricular activities finds no echo in our own Multipurpose School, where, despite much talk and theorising about the necessity for them, such co-curricular activities find little or no creative place in their life and working.

But if the American Comprehensive High School has its deficiencies and defects, some unique, others common to secondary schools in other countries including our own, it also has its values and its strengths. It must never be forgotten that American educators have been attempting during the past three or four decades



the virtually impossible, something which has never before been attempted in any other country, to provide secondary education for all children from 12—17 or 18, of a type that will be equivalent in duration, utility and, as far as possible, quality in so far as every student is able to choose from a rich variety of courses, the permutation and combination of courses best suited to his individual abilities, aptitudes, needs, interests and vocational ambitions. And, if the average Comprehensive High School in America tends to resemble a Supermarket in many respects it is because it is endeavouring to fit the school to the student, and not the student to the school as is the practice in other countries.

Again if the able child tends to be neglected in the Comprehensive High School for the sake of the majority of the average and below average, it must be remembered that in other countries the position is reversed, and the interests and needs of the large non-bookish majority of children are sacrificed for the sake of those of the small academic intellectual elite. In point of fact, the U.S.A. has probably found, in a strongly vocationally biased secondary education, the answer to the problem of educating the average and below average adolescent who is more interested in learning a trade that will help him to earn a good living, and thus to be able to live with decency and self respect as an individual and citizen, than to acquire a 'culture' that is for the most part meaningless to him.

Further, while the Comprehensive High School graduate in the U.S.A. is two or three years behind his English or European counterpart in studies, he is, because he stays at school much longer and because of his social education, better equipped on leaving High School to enter upon adult responsibilities; and the American Comprehensive School is also as much greater instrument of social mobility and national integration than the specialised, separate secondary schools in other countries. This point is emphasised by Dr. Edmund King in his provocative book "Other Schools and Ours". "The Common School," says Dr. King, "is a remarkable instrument of social mobility and the indispensable instrument of the great experiment of nation building. Those who feel misgivings of some of its intellectual standards ignore the multiple emphasis of the school, (which is not the single purpose



institution of some other nations), and they also forget that American standards have not merely advanced considerably during the past century but they have done so on a very wide scale, well over 70% of all American children between 17 and 18 are still at school. Criteria of attainment are not the only valid ones to apply to a folk institution not altogether designed for the purposes of intellectual training. Much attention is paid to socialising activities of every conceivable type. The American adolescent usually knows his way around, and has confidence that he can get where he wants to go. Perhaps most educated children in the world are deficient in this sense of adventure and personal dignity."

The same point is made from a different angle by Prof. Dennis Brogan, the great English authority on American life and institutions, "If these millions of (American) boys and girls", says Prof. Brogan, "are to be judged by their academic accomplishment, they will be judged harshly (in comparison with the academic standard of a good English, French or German School). But they are not to be so judged, for their schools are doing far more than instruct them, they are letting them instruct each other on how to live in America."

Multipurpose schools in India will have to find ways and means of incorporating these excellent features of the American Comprehensive Schools into their life and working in so far as this is possible. At present most so called Multipurpose Schools offer a choice between three courses out of the seven proposed by the Mudaliar Commission, so that there will be many boys and girls in each Multipurpose School who will not find available a course suited to their individual abilities and aptitudes. Further, even if all Multipurpose Schools were like the Model Multipurpose Schools set up under the auspices of the Central and State Governments providing all seven courses, they would still only cater for a small proportion of their pupils for two very good reasons. One is that each Course is more or less a self-contained whole, and few permutations and combinations are possible between individual subjects in the Course; and, secondly, all the courses under the present pattern of Core cum elective subjects require an almost uniformly high degree of intelligence and an above average I.Q. which the majority of students in these Multipurpose Schools, irrespective of their special aptitudes, will not possess. It will not be

possible for financial and administrative reasons, nor would it be educationally desirable, to attempt to provide the hundred and one courses provided in the American Comprehensive Schools, many of them of a somewhat trivial nature. But there is no doubt that both the number of the optional courses provided in our Multipurpose Schools needs to be increased, and several new courses of a broadly vocational type need to be introduced, if our Multipurpose Schools are to be truly multipurpose and to cater for the abilities and aptitudes of the majority of their average and below average pupils, instead of for a minority of able pupils as they do at present. Further, there is a definite need for our Multipurpose Schools to provide a much greater measure of social education to these pupils to equip them not only to be good men and women but good citizens and good workers.

Summing up, it is our considered opinion that the American Comprehensive schools, like those in other countries, have their good and bad points, their strengths and weakness, their virtues and defects. And since the Americans are a highly self-critical race, no one is more aware of the defects of their Comprehensive High Schools than are the leading American educators. The post 'sputnik' scare especially, has caused an 'agonising reappraisal' of American secondary education, the results of which have been reported on by Prof. James Bryant Conant, one of America's foremost educational thinkers, in his recent frank and outspoken book on "The American High School Today". Conant's report high-lights the defects and shortcomings of the Comprehensive High School, but also confirms its essential suitability for socio-economic conditions in the States. Among the steps which Conant observes being taken all over the U.S.A. to mitigate or eliminate the more glaring weakness and defects of the Comprehensive High Schools are a growing concern for the "gifted child"; a greater emphasis on Science and Mathematics; the attempt to provide a better balance between cultural and "bread and butter" courses in the schools, and the elimination of "frivolous courses" from the curriculum; a greater emphasis on the necessity for a sound general education for all as an essential basis for vocational training which is being postponed till the last two years of the High School and not being allowed to usurp too much of the time and energies of the students even then, and, finally, a soft



pedalling of co-curricular activities, and the extension of the duration of High School education for all till 18.

These are welcome reforms, and when they have been brought to fruition, will enable the American Comprehensive High School to meet much more successfully the tremendous and unpredictable challenge it accepted in the 20th Century, a challenge which other progressive countries like England and France are just beginning to be aware of, and one which our own country has yet to awaken to.

And it will also enable these schools to act, within inevitable limitations, as models and stimulants of such Comprehensive or Multipurpose Schools in other countries like India which have just started experimenting in this new and fascinating field. What lessons can we learn from the Comprehensive Schools of the U.S.A. that will be useful in the development of our own Multipurpose Schools? This important point has been touched upon in passing in the course of this Chapter, but it would be worthwhile to summarise our conclusions.

1. The Comprehensive School is broad based in that it caters for almost the entire adolescent population of a locality, irrespective of their social and financial standing or of their abilities, and it succeeds in retaining the vast majority of the children till they "graduate" at 17 plus. Our own Multipurpose Schools are actually serving a limited segment of our adolescent population, socially, and intellectually, and their wastage rate is heavy. Socially, these schools tend to be an upper and middle class preserve, the percentage of children from the working and agricultural classes, which form the vast majority of the population, being negligible. Intellectually, due to the heavy wastage at the primary school level and a process of natural selection and survival of the fittest, which is responsible according to some estimates for 5 out of every ten boys dropping out before they reach Class X, they progressively cater only for the above average pupils, the average and below average falling by the way side.

2. The ultimate objective of both Comprehensive School and Multipurpose education is to provide for every child, according to his ability and aptitude, the best possible secondary education for his needs, and to promote social and emotional integration between all classes and sections of the community. The American



Comprehensive School achieves its social aim to some extent (it does promote a sense of Americanism but it does not completely promote social unity and cohesion between the different classes in the U.S.A.), and its educational aim also to a limited extent. Our own Multipurpose Schools appear to be neither achieving their proposed objectives to any appreciable extent, nor does it seem, considering the socio-educational climate in which they are functioning, that they ever will, unless there are radical changes both in the educational theory and practice of the schools themselves, and of the pattern of society and the social climate of opinion both inside and outside their walls.

3. The effective control of the Comprehensive Schools lies at the grass roots, and is vested in the American people themselves who play an active and decisive part in shaping the policies and practices of those schools through their locally elected representatives. This makes them responsive to the real and constantly changing needs of their pupil population.

The control of our Multipurpose Schools is vested in each State in a centralised bureaucracy which tends to regiment and impose a uniform pattern on them, and to make them relatively unresponsive to the real and changing needs of their pupils. This pattern of relatively remote bureaucratic control tends to provide little scope for the initiative of Heads and teachers in these schools, and to stifle healthy experiment which is the lifeblood of the whole Multipurpose scheme; it also leaves parents and guardians and the local community with little say in the running of these schools. There is an urgent need for decentralisation of control, and for the active encouragement of initiative and experiment on the part of individual schools if our Multipurpose experiment is to be a real success.

4. The Comprehensive School endeavours with a fair degree of success, except in the case of the gifted child, to offer a customer tailored pattern of secondary education suited to the individual aptitudes and abilities of each and every child, average, below average and above average. Hence there is a wide and varied menu of intellectual fare provided, and individual choice is virtually *carte blanche*, so that each pupil can select, with guidance, that permutation and combination of courses which suits him best. In practice this leads to a concentration on the aver-



age and below average child to the relative neglect of the gifted, but as the former are in the majority over the latter it is the lesser of two evils. Our own Multipurpose Schools, on the other hand, cater for the able and neglect the average and below average, for though they are meant to provide a terminal life entrance education for average and below average who form the majority of their pupils, and a University entrance education for the gifted, in fact they are catering predominantly, if not entirely, for those intending to proceed for higher Studies to Universities or professional Colleges. This means that they have to set an intellectual standard out of the reach of the majority of their students, and sacrifice the interests and needs of this majority to those of the elite. The curriculum of the Multipurpose School is also of a more limited kind, offering as it does only three or four diversified courses, and the *table d'hôte* nature of these diversified courses is a further limiting factor for it does not make possible a mixture of courses which may provide many boys and girls who wish to start work after leaving school with a better balanced and more useful type of secondary education than specialising in Humanities, Science or Fine Arts.

5. The Comprehensive School curriculum stresses both general and vocational education, and the latter has a status and emphasis which is at least equal if not superior to the former. The result is that it reflects no disgrace on a student to choose a predominantly vocational course, which is the only type of course that can catch and hold the attention and interest of perhaps the majority of adolescents who are keen to get and keep a good job as soon as possible after leaving High School, and in fact the vocational side of these schools tends to overshadow the cultural. In our own Multipurpose Schools there is an obsession with 'culture' in a rather narrow academic sense of the term, vocational courses are taboo. And even in the case of such diversified courses which have a strong vocational bias like technical and Commerce, it is observed that the main objective of these courses is cultural not vocational, as if the two elements were mutually contradictory, which ends in their being neither. This is a great pity for a vocational education broadly conceived is not opposed to culture, but rather an essential element in a truly liberal culture; both the cultural and vocational element must enter in all the courses

provided at Multipurpose Schools, but in some cases the primary emphasis must be on the former, and in others (and perhaps in the case of the majority of the pupils) the chief emphasis must be on the latter. Indeed without the introduction of a variety of vocational courses into Multipurpose Schools, those schools will not be able to live up to their name or to provide that life entrance education which most of their pupils need.

6. The system of evaluation in Comprehensive Schools, the Unit and Credit system, the fact that each school sets its own school-leaving examination and graduates its own pupils is quite unique; it is informal and flexible and makes the examination follow the curriculum and teaching instead of dominating it. Our own High and Higher Secondary Examinations, externally set and marked, with rigid syllabuses prescribed by the Examining authority, tend to dominate and determine both the curriculum and methods of teaching and to be rigid and inflexible in operation. Strangely enough both systems, the one giving a freedom that tends towards licence and the other imposing a high degree of regulation and uniformity, tend to produce a uniformly low level of actual achievement. What is needed therefore in our Multipurpose schools is a system of evaluation that contains the advantages and does away with the disadvantages of both systems of examination and evaluation. Such a system has yet to be devised and on its successful evolution in the near future much will depend.

7. The problem of "drop outs" and wastage exists both in the Comprehensive and Multipurpose Schools but it is far less of a problem in the former than in the latter. Ways and means will have to be found of mitigating considerably, if we cannot solve, these problems of wastage in our Multipurpose School or the percentage of failures which includes 'drop outs' and actual examination failures will out-number the percentage of passes by 2 or 3 to one. Problem of wastages is a nightmare, and in fact is the No. 1 problem of Multipurpose Schools at present. The acid test of the success or failure of the Multipurpose Schools will lie in the extent to which they are able to find a solution to this vexed and intractable problem.



## CHAPTER V

### OUR MULTIPURPOSE SCHOOLS IN ACTION — I

*Organisation — Administration — Staffing — Pupils — School  
and Community*

THE BASIC objectives of the New Secondary Education in free India, and the type of institution which the members of the Secondary Education Commission (1953) thought would, perhaps, best achieve these objectives—the Higher Secondary Multipurpose School—were delineated in broad outline in their Report in 1954. The main recommendations of this historic report, unlike those of so many of its illustrious predecessors, were accepted almost immediately by the Planning Commission and the Central and State Governments, and plans were set on foot to implement these recommendations as far as practicable. The Central Advisory Board of Education and the newly set up All India Council of Secondary Education, (now the Directorate of Secondary Education), initiated a planned series of conferences and seminars for educational administrators, Inspectors, Heads and teachers on an All India and regional basis, at which the the broad outlines for action of the Mudaliar Report were filled in, and thus gradually a blue-print emerged for the Multipurpose School. A broad pattern of organization was outlined, curricula and syllabuses were drawn up, Higher Secondary Examination regulations framed, and teaching methods suggested. And, encouraged by the generous financial assistance offered by the Central Government, one State Government after another launched into the Multipurpose School experiment, so that to-day, barely five years after the first Multipurpose School was set up, there are over a thousand such schools in existence across the length and breadth of the country.

The State of West Bengal, living up to its reputation as a pioneer and leader in the field of Secondary Education for over a Century, was one of the first States to whole-heartedly accept the progressive recommendations of the Mudaliar Commission, and to set about the difficult task of implementing them and making a success of the new pattern of higher secondary, multipurpose education outlined by it. As early as 1955 the State Government announced its policy of upgrading all the existing X Class High Schools into Eleven Class Higher Secondary Schools, and of converting as many of the latter as it could into Multipurpose Schools as soon as possible. The first Multipurpose School was set up in 1955, and since then over 200 Multipurpose Schools and 600 Higher Secondary Schools, all of which will in the course of time be converted into Multipurpose Schools, have been established. To provide such schools with a concrete objective to work towards, the Board of Secondary Education, West Bengal, drew up regulations and syllabuses for a new school-leaving examination for Class XI of Higher Secondary and Multipurpose Schools—the Higher Secondary School Certificate examination—which would function side by side with the old Class X School Final examination till such time as all Class X High Schools were converted into Class XI Higher Secondary Schools when it would replace the School Final entirely. Candidates who were successful in passing this Higher Secondary Examination would be eligible to join the new 3 Year Degree Course drawn up by the Calcutta and other State Universities.

The basic administrative framework of the Multipurpose School is therefore complete in West Bengal. Over a hundred such schools, which are among the best in the State, have been functioning within this framework for the past five years, and have sent up their first two batches of students for the new Higher Secondary School Certificate examination. The authors, therefore, felt that the time was ripe for an interim study of the functioning of these schools with a view to locating strengths and weaknesses so that the former could be capitalised upon and the latter eliminated, or, at least, considerably mitigated. Though such a study was, of necessity, confined to the Multipurpose Schools of one State, yet, since this State was a pioneer in this field and an acknowledged leader in this sphere of Secondary



Education, and since the broad pattern of Multipurpose education is the same in all States, the authors were convinced that their findings in regard to the Multipurpose Schools of their own State would have a much wider, if not an all-India currency. Accordingly, after a great deal of thought and reflection, the authors drew up a comprehensive Questionnaire covering all aspects of Multipurpose Schooling and circulated it to the Heads of almost a hundred Multipurpose Schools which had at least five years experience of working the entire scheme and had presented two batches of students for the Higher Secondary School Certificate examination of the Board of Secondary Education, West Bengal. Unfortunately only a quarter of the Heads sounded were interested enough to reply to the Questionnaire, but the 25 Schools concerned constituted a representative cross-section of the total number, and hence the authors feel that the views expressed by these Heads are a fair sample of the views of the whole group; and, further, that the overall picture of the Multipurpose School in West Bengal that emerges from the analysis and synthesis of the independent views of the 25 Heads who completed this Questionnaire is reasonably representative of the other 75 Schools whose Heads failed to reply to the Questionnaire.

In this chapter, and the next, the authors will endeavour to give their readers a consolidated picture of certain key aspects of the "Multipurpose School in Action" in West Bengal, as mirrored in the replies of the twenty five Heads who answered their Questionnaire. Whenever possible they will corroborate and enrich their evidence by data provided by reference to a recent Survey: "Facilities available to students and Teachers for Study and Work in Higher Secondary Schools of West Bengal" carried out by the Department of Statistics of the Calcutta University which provides a wealth of valuable data on various aspects of the functioning of Higher Secondary and Multipurpose Schools in Calcutta and the 24 Parganas districts. This chapter will deal mainly with matters such as organisation and administration, staffing and school — pupil — community relationships, and the next with the closely related aspects of curricula, methods of teaching and evaluation, and of educational and vocational guidance.

The term "Multipurpose School" in West Bengal is commonly applied to a Class XI Higher Secondary School which, besides a common core of general education for all pupils, provides at least three of the diversified courses suggested by the Mudaliar Commission i.e. Humanities, Science, Technical, Home Science, Commerce, Fine Arts and Agriculture. All the 25 Multipurpose Schools covered in the survey—the greater majority of these were Boy's Schools—provided three of the elective courses; and the Humanities Group was common to all. Beyond this basic similarity, there were divergencies. Almost all the Boys' Schools provided Science, but only an occasional Girl's School; the latter generally provided Home Science instead. The Technical Course was the third most popular elective course in the majority of the Boys' Schools, with Commerce almost equally popular; in the Girls' Schools the third elective course was usually Commerce or Fine Arts. None of the schools dealt with in this survey provided Agriculture, which, the authors understand, is only provided by a handful of Multipurpose School in the State which are situated in rural areas. The picture provided by the above distribution of courses among the Schools which answered our Questionnaire is filled in by the results of the Calcutta University Survey. The Survey revealed that all the Boys' and Girls' Schools surveyed by them offered the Humanities course, 90% approximately of the Boys' Schools and 37% of the Girls' Schools offered Science; 28% of the Boys' and 7% of the Girls' Schools Commerce; 6% of the Boys' Schools Technical and 44% of the Girls' Schools Home Science.

These figures reveal that while the provision of Science and Humanities for the boys and of Humanities and Home Science for the girls is on the whole satisfactory, the provision of Commerce for both boys and girls, of Technical for the boys and Science for the girls is inadequate so that the freedom of choice of pupils with regard to these courses is greatly restricted.

The Heads appeared to be aware of this, for the majority of the Heads did not appear to be satisfied with three courses. In answer to the question "Would you like to have facilities for any additional course or courses", twenty Heads replied in the affirmative; of these sixteen wanted the Commerce course, usually in addition to Humanities, Science and Technical, and



for the Technical in addition to Humanities, Science and Commerce. It would appear from these answers that, so far as Boys' Multipurpose Schools are concerned, in the opinion of the Heads, a good school of this type should provide four elective courses: Humanities, Science, Technical and Commerce; too few Girls' Schools replied to draw any such general conclusions.

The following reasons were given by the Heads who wished for additional courses (the numbers in brackets indicating the number of Heads of this opinion) — to provide for the differential abilities and aptitudes of all pupils (6); to give the education provided in their schools a vocational bias (5); to provide life-preparatory education (3); to meet popular demand (6). These views would appear to indicate that the Heads of Multipurpose Schools in West Bengal are broadly in favour of additional courses of a vocational, life-entrance type. Yet when asked specifically whether they would like more life-preparatory, vocational courses as opposed to College-preparatory ones, fifteen heads replied in the negative and only ten in the affirmative.

The somewhat confused thinking about the specific objectives of the elective course was apparent also in the Heads' views about the general objectives of the Multipurpose School.

In this connection Heads were asked to list in order of priority the four major objectives of Multipurpose education:

1. To provide a sound general education with vocational bias.
2. To prepare students for an occupation at the end of their school career.
3. To prepare students to enter professional courses after leaving school.
4. To develop wide interests and a well developed personality.

Objective one and objective three rated jointly as priority No. 1 of Multipurpose School Heads, with objective 4 a close second, and objective two bringing up the rear. And, indeed, the overall impression created by their answers to the entire Questionnaire was that Heads tended to think of the Multipurpose School, not as providing a terminal, life-entrance education for the majority and a preparation for higher education of a general or professional character for the minority, as envisaged by the Mulaliar Com-

mission, but just the opposite. The Multipurpose School in their opinion, in short, was a gateway to a general or professional College not to life, and the Higher Secondary Certificate examination a 'college-entrance not a life-entrance examination, the old Matriculation writ large.' Ratings on a five point scale as to what extent (completely, considerably, average, minimum, and not at all) the major objectives of Multipurpose education outlined earlier were being realised in their respective schools were interesting and significant. The following is a digest of their views:

	<i>Completely</i>	<i>Considerably</i>	<i>Average</i>	<i>Minimum</i>	<i>Not at all</i>
Objective 1	1	5	12	4	3
Objective 2	x	4	8	7	6
Objective 3	1	9	9	3	3
Objective 4	x	5	8	9	3

From this table it appears that Heads felt they were best achieving objectives 3, 1, 2 and 4 in order of priority which reveals a conflict between theory and practice that is interesting and significant.

That Heads were aware of this dichotomy between theory and practice, and also the reason for it, is shown by their opinion concerning the main obstacles to the realisation of the main objectives of Multipurpose education as envisaged by them. The following obstacles were listed by Heads (numbers indicate the number of Heads of this opinion).

1. A hostile and unstimulating social environment (4).
2. Uninformed criticism of public leaders and some teachers organisations of the Multipurpose School (21).
3. Lack of occupational facilities for school-leavers (3).
4. Lack of integration between schools and Colleges and lack of further educational and Training facilities for students not going into College (3).
5. Poor home background of pupil (3).
6. Prevailing unrest among students due to socio-economic conditions and malnutrition.



7. Inadequate Finance (2).
8. Inadequate and unsuitable staff (11) and instability of staffing (3).
9. Unsatisfactory emoluments and service conditions of staff (3).
10. Poor staff-student ratio and lack of personal relationships between the staff and pupils (1).
11. Majority of pupils unfit for higher education (3).
12. Lack of vocational courses (2).
13. Premature specialisation and too early choice of specialisation (1).

These thirteen obstacles, which fall into two main interconnected categories — Socio-economic and environmental, and educational — are fairly comprehensive, and merit careful study and further research by those interested in the success of the Multipurpose School experiment.

Equally worthy of study and reflection on the part of our educational administrators are the conditions which the Heads considered should be fulfilled by High Schools before conversion into Higher Secondary Multipurpose Schools, and their estimate as to whether their respective schools fulfilled the conditions laid down by them or not.

Several Heads felt that the responsible authorities had not in all cases given adequate consideration to the merits and demerits of a particular school before it was decided to convert it into a Multipurpose School, and stressed that proper consideration was vital to prevent failures.

The following were the conditions or which Heads thought the authorities should focus their attention in attempting to decide which High Schools to upgrade and convert into Multipurpose Schools.

1. The school should have, or be given the means to provide adequate accommodation for class room and extra class activities, and adequate furniture and equipment. Of the 14 Heads who listed this pre-condition, twelve said their schools fulfilled it, and two that they did not.

2. The school should have the space for present needs and future expansion. Of the fourteen heads who listed this condition, nine said their schools fulfilled this condition and four that they did not.
3. One head stressed that the school should be the centre of a network of easy communications.
4. A few Heads stated that the school should have an enthusiastic and able Managing Committee with a broad educational outlook, and all stated their Committees were of this type.

Passing from the realm of theory to the realm of actual practice, it is interesting to study the details of accommodation, organisation, staffing and certain other important facets of the Multipurpose Schools in West Bengal that are relevant to its administrative set up.

The first administrative condition of any good school, and still more of the multipurpose school, is that it should be well situated, and that its total area should be adequate not only for present needs but for future expansion.

The majority of the twenty-five schools, about which information was supplied, were situated in Greater Calcutta or in large mofussil towns. With regard to present needs, seventeen heads stated that the school area was adequate, six that it was to some extent, and two not at all. Where future expansion was concerned, thirteen stated there was adequate room for future expanding, six that there was some room but not enough, and six that there was no room at all.

Only ten reported adequate space for co-curricular activities nine that they had some space, and six that they had none.

Buildings, while a means to an end, are an important means to good education. While a few Heads reported that they had well-sited, well-built and commodious buildings, many reported that their buildings were not very functional being scattered and badly planned and built, and often situated in unhygienic surroundings in congested built-up areas. Seventeen Heads felt their classroom accommodation was adequate, and eight that it was inadequate.



With regard to special room accommodation the situation was as follows:

Thirteen schools had an Assembly Hall and twelve did not; twenty of the twenty five schools had a Library; fifteen out of twenty five an Art and Craft Room; and fifteen out of twenty five a Geography Room. All twenty five schools reported that they had one or more Science Laboratories, but only five out of twenty five had Gymnasiums.

That the overall accommodation situation was not satisfactory is shown by the fact that nineteen of the twenty five schools felt the necessity of putting up building extensions and hoped for Government aid to the extent of 87% to enable them to complete their building plans.

The overall picture with regard to furniture and equipment was similar to that with regard to building. Eleven Schools reported they had adequate furniture and equipment for general subjects; thirteen that they had basic but not adequate furniture and equipment, and one that it had little or none.

With regard to furniture and equipment for special subjects, thirteen reported they had adequate, nine that they had basic but inadequate provision, and three that their provision was totally inadequate. When sounded about their provision of audio-visual aids which are so necessary a part of modern school equipment the majority of schools presented a dismal picture. Nine reported they had no audio-visual aids whatsoever, only four had projectors, six epidiascopes, and three Radios. Finally, only six schools reported that they made a planned use of such audio-visual aids as they possessed; the others were discreetly silent.

The nature of the plant of a School, using the term in the widest sense to include the site and area covered by the School, the buildings, accommodation, furniture and equipment and the use to which it is put, is an important conditioning factor in the relative success or failure of the school. The more functional and appropriate the plant, the better will be the functioning of the school, other things being equal.

But more important that the physical plant of a school is the human plant—the various persons who comprise the school community and the network of relationships between them for it is the human factor that is the real determining element in an



institution like a school. The main human partners in the Multipurpose School enterprise are the members of the School Managing Committee, the Heads, the staff, the pupils, parents and guardians, and, last but not the least, the community in general outside the walls of the School. Hence a large portion of one Questionnaire was directed towards endeavouring to find out to what extent these various human elements were pulling together and exerting their best effort in a co-operative endeavour to make a success of the Multipurpose experiment.

In India Managing Committees play an important role in the successful functioning or otherwise of schools, they can either be a great stimular or a great obstacle to progress — there is no middle way. The vast majority of the Heads who answered the Questionnaire appeared to be satisfied with the composition of their Managing Committees and of their own personal relationship with them. Seventeen Heads replied that their relationship with their Committees was good, seven that it was satisfactory, and only one that it was unsatisfactory. Fifteen did not want any change in their Committee but ten reported that they would welcome some changes. (Desirable changes in the view of these Heads were limitation of the powers of Managing Committees to fund raising, smaller and more compact Committees and the abolition of the practice of Government nominations to such committees) Strangely enough not one of the Heads expressed a wish to see the end of the dubious practice of electing parents' and guardians' representatives which leads to so much trouble in this State and in others where this principle operates.

The Head of the Multipurpose School is perhaps the greatest single factor in determining its relative success or failure. While the whole Questionnaire was designed to elicit strengths and weaknesses in the Heads, there were some specific question in the Questionnaire to probe into various important facets of successful Headship such as the relationship of Heads with their staff, pupils and the Community, and how the Head distributed his time among his various responsibilities. Asked to describe their general overall relationship with their staff, eleven Heads reported that it was democratic, two that it was autocratic and twelve that it was a mixture of both. Sixteen went on to report that their staff generally participated in policy making, seven that they



occasionally were called upon to do so, and two that they were never consulted on policy matters.

Staff meetings are acknowledged to be one of the best ways of promoting Head Staff cooperation and bringing about a satisfactory relationship between them. In twelve schools the number of staff meetings held was adequate to achieve to some extent the above objectives, in eleven they were so so and in six quite inadequate; but even where the number of meetings were adequate or just about so, the follow-up was poor in nine schools, fair in four and adequate in eleven.

Approximately two-thirds of the Heads appeared to be distributing their valuable time reasonably satisfactorily between their five main responsibilities — General Administration, supervision of Staff, Teaching, Interviewing parents and guardians and reading and reflection. But in the remainder of the cases, the distribution of time between their various duties was unsatisfactory, in so far that too much time appeared to be given to general administration or interviewing parents or teaching or to all three, far too little to the proper supervision and in-service education and training of their staff and on reading and reflection.

In reply to a printed question as to whether they thought the Head of a Multipurpose School was competent to supervise the different streams of the school adequately, sixteen Heads reported that they could, four that they could to some extent, and five that they could not. In order to help the Head to supervise the work of the entire Multipurpose School, seventeen Heads supported the appointment of Departmental Heads, and eleven of them reported that they actually had such Departmental Heads in their schools; the others did not consider such Departmental Heads were necessary, and did not have them in their respective schools.

The above facts reveal that by and large not only do Heads tend to overrate their ability to make a success of the Multipurpose School single handed, but that they do not take adequate measures to enlist the fullest possible cooperation of the staff, either through the devolution of responsibility or through the holding of well-planned and conducted staff meetings. Head-staff relationships in Multipurpose Schools, in other words, are not all they should be.

The proper staffing of the Multipurpose School is a vitally unimportant element in the success or failure of this new type of Secondary School. The future of the Multipurpose Schools will depend largely on the calibre, the vision and drive, the general education and professional expertise of the teachers who man them. Hence a good deal of attention was focused in our Questionnaire on the teachers in Multipurpose Schools, their academic and professional qualifications and experience, their personality and character, and an endeavour was made to find out whether the type of teachers needed were available in sufficient numbers and whether their conditions of service in the school were such as to encourage them to give of their best.

The academic and professional qualifications of teachers for Multipurpose Schools in West Bengal have been laid down by the Board of Secondary Education. Teachers teaching Classes VI—VIII, the Core subjects must be trained graduates, and the senior teachers of the elective subjects in Classes IX—XI must possess an Honours or Masters' Degree in the subject they wish to teach and preferably be trained. An exception is made in the case of experienced Science Graduates, in view of the grave shortage of men and women teachers with Honours or Masters Degrees in Science, provided they take a special six month, intensive Content Course in the Science subject they intend to teach—Physics, Chemistry or Biology. In addition of these paper qualifications, appointing authorities generally hold that intending teachers in Multipurpose Schools should have an open enquiring mind and a willingness to experiment, a belief in this new venture in Secondary Education and an awareness of its problems and challenges.

Are there enough teachers with these qualities and qualifications available in the existing Multipurpose Schools in West Bengal to give them a fair chance of success? And if there are, are all conditions of service in these schools such as to be a stimulus to such teachers to throw their full weight into the task of making a real success of the Multipurpose experiment?

On the basis of answers to specific questions in our Questionnaire, the following light can be thrown on these matters.

From the replies of the Heads, there appears to be a sufficiency, (their quality in many cases leaves much to be desired), of trained



Graduates for the Middle School classes. Language teachers appeared to be available, but not of good calibre especially where the teaching of English and Hindi as a "second language" are concerned. Teachers of the Core subjects Craft, and General Science appeared to be generally available, but good teachers of Social Studies are very difficult to find.

The position with regard to teachers of the elective subjects who are required to have an Honours or Master's degree, is as follows. Teachers of Humanities are generally available, but there is a definite deficiency of such teachers for the other streams, and in the case of Science, Home Science and Technical subjects and Agricultural the deficiency appears to be chronic.

Facts bear out these observations. While on an average every Multipurpose School which answered our Questionnaire had eight or nine trained graduates on its staff, the average number of Post-graduates teachers employed by them was four as against the nine which they should have — 3 per subject for the three elective subjects — and some schools only had one or two such teachers on their staff.

That this dearth of qualified and experienced teachers is not confined to the Schools surveyed by us is borne out by the Calcutta University Survey.

This Survey revealed that approximately 40% of the teachers in Higher Secondary School for boys and girls in Calcutta and 24 Parganas possessed Honours or Master degrees, approximately 45% a Pass degree, and the remainder were undergraduates. Of the teachers possessing graduate or Post-graduate degrees, only about one third were trained.

On examining the position with regard to the different Core and Elective subjects an even more interesting situation is evident. 40% of the teachers of English possessed an Honours or Post-graduate degree, another 48% were graduates, and approximately 10% undergraduates. The picture is more gloomy with regard to Bengali where the percentage of undergraduate teachers is 19% and the percentage of teachers having an Honours or Post-graduate degree only 36%.

The difficulty of finding properly qualified teachers for the elective subject appears to be even more acute from the Calcutta University Survey than it appeared to be from ours.

As stated senior teachers teaching these subjects are expected to possess an Honours or Masters degree and preferably be trained.

The actual position with regard to some of the major diversified groups is as follows as revealed by the University Survey.

In the Science group the percentage of Mathematics teachers possessing an Honours or Master degree is 25%, in Physics approximately 55%, in Chemistry 50%, and 70% in Biology.

In the Humanities group the situation is a little better. In Civics and Economics approximately 65% of the teachers have Honours or Post-graduate degrees, but in Logic and Psychology such teachers are very scarce. The position with regard to History and Geography appears to be almost the same as with regard to Civics and Economics.

The data collected by us, supplemented by that provided by the Calcutta University Survey, clearly indicates that both the Core and Elective subjects, which should be taught only by teachers with Honours or Post-graduate degrees, are in point of fact being taught in the majority of cases by trained or untrained pass graduates, and, in some cases, even by undergraduates. Nor do the Heads appear hopeful that the shortage of Honours or Master degree holders, especially in Science and Technical subjects, will be met in the foreseeable future. The difficulty of upgrading standards in the elective subjects in view of the fact that they are being taught by underqualified teachers becomes obvious.

Academic and professional qualifications, while important, are not enough for successful teaching in Multipurpose Schools. An equally important issue is — Have the existing teachers, Graduate or Post-graduate, in such schools the vision, the sense of duty and honesty of purpose, the professional integrity and the qualities of head and heart to really make a success of the great experiment of multipurpose education? In answer to a straight question as to whether, in their considered opinion, the majority of their staff were individually and collectively aware of the implications of the Multipurpose experiment, and personally and professionally equipped to measure up to it, 42% of the Heads answered in the affirmative, an equal number "to some extent" and 6% in the negative. Pressed to elaborate on the strong and



weak points of their staff, the Heads spelled out some of the reasons that prompted their overall assessment. Among the strong points stressed by the Heads who were optimistic about their teachers were that their staff was, by and large, adequate, qualified, experienced, co-operative, interested in co-curricular activities as well as work in the classroom, and that some of their teachers, though not all, were young, energetic and sincere.

Those Heads, on the other hand, who were pessimistic about their teachers, emphasised the following weak points: the staff was inadequate, of poor quality, insufficiently qualified, inexperienced, overworked, unstable and irresponsible, being more interested on private tuitions, of which they had too many, and casual leave than in honest work.

On being further questioned as to the reasons for the current deficiencies among their staff in number, qualifications and professional zeal, Heads stressed the following in order of priority: unattractive remuneration and prospects, poor status, the exacting nature of the work of teaching, unsatisfactory service conditions of Higher Secondary compared with College teaching, though identical qualifications were prescribed for both, the far better prospects in the other learned professions and in Commerce and Industry.

Encouraging features however emerged from the Heads' answers to other related questions. The teachers' attitude to the Multipurpose experiment was reported to be favourable on the whole, their co-operation with the Heads satisfactory, and their relationship with their pupils, by and large, friendly.

Outside observers may feel the actual situation in the above respects is not perhaps as rosy as it has been pointed by the Heads who answered the Questionnaire; nevertheless such is the consensus of their considered views. Further, it would appear, if the answer of the Heads are any indication, that the teachers are on the whole conscious of their deficiencies, and eager to improve themselves by various forms of in-service education and training. Forms of in-service education and training listed by the Heads were deputation for training in the case of untrained teachers — and attendance at Seminars, Refresher Courses, Conferences and Workshops organised in most cases by the Extension Service Departments of the Training Colleges in the case of trained and

experienced teachers. Teachers had, on the whole, in the opinion of the Heads benefitted from the various kinds of in-service training provided for them. But questions about one of the best and most obvious forms of in-service education and training of school staffs — attendance at regular, well planned and carefully followed up staff meetings — revealed that such meetings are held rather infrequently in the greater majority of schools, and very inadequately followed up even when they are held.

Asked to suggest the most essential reforms necessary to attract and retain the right number and quality of teachers needed to make Multipurpose Schools a real and lasting success, Heads were unanimous that the first and an absolutely essential precondition was a much more attractive salary scale, coupled with better service conditions, the provision of staff quarters and old age benefits, and the raising of the status of the teaching profession. Other measures suggested by a number of Heads were an increased output of Science specialists by the Universities; special Honours classes for pass Graduates to equip them with the necessary qualification to teach in Higher Secondary classes; fewer hours of work for specialists teaching classes IX to XI as in the Colleges; tangible encouragement for honest and sincere teachers, and a better, more up to date and more positive and helpful Inspectorate. The suggested reforms are quite practical and practicable, and if implemented would improve the present unsatisfactory staff position in Multipurpose Schools considerably.

Most of the Schools which replied to our Questionnaire were Class VI — XI Higher Secondary Schools. Estimates as to minimum roll strength necessary for such schools varied between 180 and 500, for the maximum roll strength between 350 — 1,000, and for an optimum roll strength from 180 to 750. The actual roll strength of the schools varied between 500 — 1,000. Heads were of the considered opinion that between 25% to 50% of the pupils enrolled in their schools were not fit intellectually to make a success of Higher Secondary Schooling, and most of them reported that they could not and did not make any provision for the proper education of such backward and retarded pupils, with the result that such pupils usually drop out of school at various stage before Class XI. This wastage is one of the depressing



features of the Multipurpose school set up and will be dealt with later.

The majority of pupils — 60% on the average — of pupils opted for the Science Course according to the figures supplied by the Heads who answered our Questionnaire. As a result the Course was generally over crowded. In Boys' schools which provided Technical and Humanities in addition to Science, Technical was the second most popular course, and Humanities third, where Commerce and Humanities were provided, they were almost equally popular.

The Calcutta University Survey confirms the order of popularity of the respective Courses. 40% of the students in the Schools surveyed by them opted for Science, 30% for Humanities, and, in the schools that provided it, 30% for Technical and about 20% for Commerce.

In Girls' Schools the majority chose the Humanities (over 70%), about 15% Science, and only 7% Home Science.

An important element in the relative success or failure of the Multipurpose School will be the attitude of parents and guardians, and indeed of the community as a whole, to these Schools, and the degree to which they are willing to extend to the authorities their informed co-operation and active support. Were parents and guardians, in general aware of the true significance, the educational and sociological implications and the real objectives of the Multipurpose experiment? Have they by and large welcomed the Multipurpose School, or do they regard it as an unwelcome imposition on them by educational administrators and the Government? Do the majority of parents take an active and informed interest in this new type of Secondary School, or are they apathetic and even hostile towards it? What contacts have the Multipurpose Schools with parents, and what steps have they taken and can they take to arouse interest and win parental support? And, finally, have the community at large welcomed the Multipurpose idea, and if not, why not? An endeavour was made by the authors, through the Questionnaire, to find tentative answers to these vexed questions.

Only one Head of the twenty-five who replied to the Questionnaire considered that parents and guardians fully understood the true significance and objectives of the Multipurpose experiment;

nineteen felt they understood it to some extent; and four that they had no conception what it was all about. Nine Heads stated that parents had given full support to the Multipurpose idea; twelve that it had received qualified support from parents, and four that they regarded it as an imposition. These views exhibit some minor contradictions, but the overall consensus of opinion appears to be that, parental understanding of, interest in, and support for, the Multipurpose experiment has been found wanting.

What steps, if any, can heads take to educate parents about the Multipurpose school and what have they actually done in this regard. Frequent meetings and personal contact between Heads and teachers and parents, individual and group conferences on specific aspects of Multipurpose Schooling, Parent-Teacher associations and articles in the School Magazine and local newspapers were some of the means suggested by Heads to popularise the Multipurpose School. But, in practice, both in the regard to the frequency of their contact with parents, and in the number of parents contacted by the majority of Heads, the position appears to be far from satisfactory. Six heads reported frequent contacts with parents, thirteen regular but less frequent contacts, and six few or no contact at all. With regard to the number of parents contacted by the Heads, three reported personal contact with all parents, sixteen with the majority, and six with only a few. On probing further it was discovered that only three of the schools whose Heads answered the Questionnaire have Parent-Teacher Associations, and even these three do not consider that their associations have been functioning satisfactorily, mainly because of the apathy of the parents.

Finally, considerable community support for the Multipurpose School is reported by seven of the Heads, some support by fourteen, and no support by four.

Summing up one can conclude that parental and community support for the Multipurpose School is generally lacking, and that the School authorities have done very little to remedy this very unsatisfactory state of affairs. The enlightened and active support of parents and guardians in particular, and of the community as a whole is for the Multipurpose School a *sine quo non* for its real and enduring success. Suitable measures to promote it appear to be urgently needed.



## CHAPTER VI

### OUR MULTIPURPOSE SCHOOLS

#### IN ACTION—II

Curriculum: *Methods of Teaching; Evaluation and guidance in Multipurpose Schools*

THE CURRICULUM is the key to Multipurpose school — reform. The Multipurpose school differs from a traditional school primarily in the provision of diversified courses in its curriculum to suit the differential abilities, aptitudes and interests among its pupils. In addition to this scope for specialisation, the Multipurpose school curriculum also makes provision for cultural and general education. Another of the professed objectives of the Multipurpose school curriculum is to provide a terminal education (Vocational education designed to fit pupils to enter life on the termination of the course) for those pupils who do not intend to proceed to, or are unfit for, higher studies. Striking a proper balance between general and special education, providing for both vocational and academic education, and catering both for the gifted and the average pupils are some of the major problems of Curriculum construction for Multipurpose Schools.

Much care has been taken in framing the Curriculum for our Multipurpose Schools. The Secondary Education Commission, laid down the general principles on which it should be based. In pursuance of those principles, the All India Council of Secondary Education prepared a draft syllabus for the consideration of the States. A special committee in each State examined the draft syllabus and ultimately framed the Multipurpose School Curriculum for its State. But despite the great care taken to frame it, the final Multipurpose School Curriculum appears to have satisfied neither pupils, nor teachers nor parents and guardians.

The authors through a questionnaire, circulated among the heads of Multipurpose Schools in West Bengal having at least two years experience in them, tried to gather information about the actual working of the Multipurpose School curriculum. Twenty five of the heads responded to the questionnaire.

It is interesting to note that most of the heads do not have much faith in the Curriculum which it is their responsibility to work out in schools. In reply to a straight question fifteen out of the twenty five heads state that the Multipurpose school curriculum is unsatisfactory. A workman, who does not believe in his work or who distrusts his tools cannot be expected to do his work satisfactorily.

Entering into details, it appears that the syllabuses of the "Core Subjects" are more disliked by the heads than those of the "elective subjects". There is no syllabus in the list of Core subjects which has not been disapproved by at least seven of the heads. It appears that the syllabus of Elementary Mathematics is the least objectionable (being disapproved by seven) while that of Social studies is the most objectionable (being disapproved by ten) of them.

Most of the heads also feel that the Syllabuses framed for the Core Subjects are not serving the basic purpose for which they have been introduced. Only five of them could give an unqualified affirmative to a question as to whether the Syllabuses of the core-subjects are achieving their main objective, which is to prepare pupils for better citizenship; the answer of seven heads to the question is in a categorical negative. Again, only nine heads feel that the core subjects offer sound general education to the pupils. The following table should give a more specific idea about the opinion of the heads in regard to the syllabuses of core subjects.

<i>Sl. No.</i>	<i>Name of the Core Subject.</i>	<i>No. of Heads approving</i>	<i>No. of Heads disapproving</i>	<i>Reasons for disapproval</i>	<i>No. of Heads endorsing the defect</i>
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
1.	Mother tongue (Bengali)	15	10	Too heavy (History of literature and Grammar to be omitted)	6



(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
2.	Second Language (English)	14	11	(1) There should be study of more literature (2) Too heavy (3) Suitable textbooks not available	2 2 2
3.	Third Language (Hindi)	16	9	(1) Too heavy	2
4.	Social Studies	13	12	(1) Superfluous for Humanities group (2) Too heavy (3) Not sufficiently integrated	2 3 1
5.	General Science	16	9	(1) Too heavy and difficult for Humanities students (2) Superfluous for Science students	3 3
6.	Elementary Mathematics	18	17	(1) Too heavy and difficult for Humanity students (2) Superfluous for Science students	2 3
7.	Craft	16	9	(1) Too heavy	2

From the above, it is clear that the Heads are superficial in their criticisms of the Core curriculum. Many heads expressed disapproval of particular syllabuses, but failed to assign any reason for the disapproval. Those who assigned reasons for their disapproval did not go deep into the problem, and in most cases made such general remarks as "too heavy", "too difficult", "superfluous" etc.

The syllabuses of the elective subjects, as has been stated before, seem to enjoy greater favour with the heads. None of them appeared to completely disapprove the syllabuses of elective subjects. But the number of heads in complete agreement with them is only ten (out of 25); the others (15) are only "Somewhat" in agreement with them. Further, in the list of subjects with unsuitable syllabuses, prepared by individual heads, most of the important subjects such as History, Sanskrit, Bengali, Mathematics, Physics, Chemistry etc. find a place. On the other hand, the make-up of the seven elective groups is approved by all the heads save two. Most of the heads do not want to have any more additional groups. Only one or two of them suggest the inclusion of a few vocational subjects, such as Electrical Engineering, Dairy Farming, and Salesmanship. Further the heads are in favour of retaining all the existing groups, according to them none of the groups is unnecessary.

It is interesting to note, that the heads do not themselves have a clear understanding of the objectives underlying the Multipurpose School Curriculum. For example, more than half of the heads feel that the objective of the elective groups is to provide vocational education, while less than half feel that their purpose is to provide education according to abilities and interests of pupils. At the same time, as has been stated before, they approve of the make-up of the elective groups. It should have been evident to any one who has gone through the Syllabuses that they are far from vocational in content and that their goal is to prepare pupils for corresponding higher courses in the colleges. In fact, in another context, more than half of the heads state that the Multipurpose School Curriculum is suitable to prepare pupils for colleges, while less than half state that they are suitable to prepare them for life. The Heads cannot be blamed for this divergence of views among them. It is obvious from their nomenclature that the seven elective groups in the curriculum have been selected to correspond to certain broad types of vocations existing in Society; they have not been selected in terms of the differential abilities and aptitudes required to pursue different types of higher courses. But at the same time the syllabuses for the seven groups are academic and not vocational in nature and content. The Multipurpose School Curri-



culum is therefore not offering terminal education to the majority of pupils as professed; nor can it be considered to be offering pupils better opportunities to study according to interests and abilities. The only thing, which it may have achieved is to eliminate the Intermediate courses and to bring them partially at least within Multipurpose School courses. No wonder, that the heads are confused in regard to the objectives they are expected to pursue while trying to work out the curriculum, as a result they do not have faith in the work with which they are entrusted. These are most serious facts. A workman who does not find meaning in his work and does not have faith in it, can never make a good job of it.

The consequences of the above confusion of mind on the part of the Heads is reflected in the allotment of time made by them for the study of different subjects in the curriculum. The allotment of time for the study of core-subjects in particular seems to be most unsatisfactory. There is no uniformity among schools in regard to the emphasis (in terms of time allotment) given to the study of different core-subjects.

Take for example the cases of Mother-tongue and English — In the case of both, the subjects the number of periods allotted for study per week varies from 5 to 10 between schools. In case of Craft the variation in allotment of weekly periods is between 1 and 6. In the case of Mathematics there are schools which allot only 3 periods per week for its study, while there are others which make provision for 6 periods per week for the same purpose. The provision of weekly periods for the study of a 3rd language varies from 1 to 4 among schools. There seems to be near unanimity among heads only in regard to provision of time for the study of Social studies and General Science.

With regard to the relative importance given to the study of the different core-subjects in terms of time allotment, it may be noted that the first two languages are over weighted. The time allotted to the study of any one of them is almost equal to what is allotted to the other 5 core-subjects taken together. We wonder.

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The report published by the Department of Statistics Calcutta University (Preliminary Report No. 1 on Facilities Available to students and Teachers for study and work in Higher Secondary Schools of West Bengal, p. 21) supports this finding.

whether this allotment has been done on the basis of any consciously thought-out principle. Attention should also be drawn to the fact that many heads (about 19 out of 25) consider the time which they have allotted for the study of any core-subject as inadequate (irrespective of the number of periods, 5 or 10 which may have been allotted). No uniform policy is followed by the heads in regard to allotment of time for the study of elective subjects as well: Generally speaking, the heads progressively increase the allotment of time for the study of elective subjects from class IX to XI. This should naturally be the case in West Bengal as the study of some of the core-subjects are discontinued in class IX and of some others in class X. Only the 1st and 2nd languages are studied in class XI. But inspite of this there are many heads who keep the time allotment to elective subjects constant throughout. Again, there is no unanimity in regard to the total number of periods to be allotted for the study of these subjects. There are heads who spend less than  $\frac{1}{4}$  of the total school hours for the study of these subjects while there are others, who spend more than half of the school hours for the same purpose. It is interesting to note that a large number of heads (10 out of 25) consider that the time which they have succeeded in allotting to the study of elective subjects as more satisfactory than in the case of core-subjects; but it should be pointed out that none the less the majority of heads consider the time allotment to elective subjects inadequate as well.

The conclusion which emerges from the above analysis is that there is great confusion of mind among the heads in regard to the manner in which the curriculum is to be worked out. Indeed, the educational experience of pupils reading in different schools which follow the same curriculum is by no means uniform.

There is a general feeling that the greatest obstacles in the satisfactory working out of the Multipurpose School Curriculum is the non-availability of suitable teachers and text books. But it appears that the Heads do not consider their staff, on the whole, as unsuitable and inadequate to face up to the task. In answer to a straight question as whether their teachers are equipped for teaching the various subjects in the Multipurpose Curriculum, only one head replied in the categorical negative, while



twelve heads replied in categorical affirmative. The rest of the heads felt that their teachers were only partly equipped to teach the Multipurpose School subjects. But the above verdict may not reflect the true opinion of the heads, because in another context, when asked to list the merits of their staff, only four heads stated that they have "qualified staff". Again, when considering the academic qualifications of the staff, it is found that there are schools without a single trained post-graduate member on the staff. There are some schools which have to carry on their classes with the help of part-time post-graduate teachers. There is one school, where there is not a single post-graduate teacher (trained or untrained) on the staff; and, further, the number of untrained graduates in most schools is greater than the number of trained graduates. The Report published in the Department of Statistics, Calcutta University, referred to earlier, lends support to this finding. Under the circumstances, the complacency of the heads in regard to the suitability of their staff is a source of worry rather than of optimism.

The heads appear to be suffering from the same type of complacency in regard to the availability of suitable text books. When asked whether they have suitable text books for the study of different subjects or not, none of the heads answered with a categorical negative, either in the case of the core or of the elective subjects. The same question was answered with a categorical affirmative by 15 and 13 heads in case of core subjects and elective subjects respectively. But when asked to make a list of subjects in which suitable text books are not available, one or the other head listed most of the subjects in the elective groups (Chemistry, Physics, General Engineering, Applied Mathematics, Geography, History, Agriculture, Economics History, Home Science etc.) and two of the subjects from the core-group (Social studies and English). Two of the heads said that suitable text books are not available for any of the subjects (either core and elective). It is also interesting to note in this connection that the heads (19 out of 25) consider that the number and quality of reference books possessed by them are satisfactory, though it is a well known fact that good reference books in various subjects in Bengali... is negligible. Since it was felt that the utilisation of new methods of teaching is essential for successfully working out of the Multipur-



pose school Curriculum, the heads were asked whether the teachers were using these new methods; and, as the use of the such methods is more important in the case of the core-subjects, the question was asked with particular reference to the teaching of those subjects. Only four heads replied with a categorical negative, while the answer of six heads was a categorical affirmative. The majority of the heads were of the opinion that the teachers were using the new methods of teaching to some extent.

To probe into the matter further, the following list of teaching methods which may be used in schools, was made— (1) Formal talk and chalk lessons (2) Dictation of notes (3) Activity methods — Projects — Surveys, etc (4) Practical work by pupils (5) Observation and Demonstration lessons (6) Minor research work in the library etc. (7) Any other method not mentioned above. The heads were then requested to indicate their priority in regard to the above methods both in terms of their intrinsic importance and in terms of their frequency of use in schools. Except for two heads the rest gave the formal talk and chalk lessons either the first or the second place in terms of intrinsic importance. One of the two deviates gave it the 3rd and the other the 5th place. Practical work by pupils was listed next to formal talk and chalk lessons in order of intrinsic importance by a majority of the heads. But there was less unanimity of opinion among the heads in the case of the former than in case of the latter. The valuation of this method by the heads in order of intrinsic importance ranged from 1 to 7. Observation and Demonstration occupied the next place in the list; dictation of notes and minor research work in library followed in sequence. But in case of these three methods the uniformity among the heads in rating was still poorer. No head mentioned any method under the head "any other method not mentioned". Wide variation among the heads (except in case of formal talk and chalk lessons) in the evaluation of intrinsic importance of different methods of teaching, indicates that they do not have much experience in following them; they were unanimous in their opinion about the method of which they have experience, the formal talk and chalk method.

Indeed, according to the statements of the heads, the formal talk and chalk method was most frequently used in their schools



(without any exception). In most of the schools dictation of notes occupied the second place in terms of frequency of use. Practical work by pupils and observation and experiments came next in sequence in the list, while activity methods and minor research work in the library were not very much used as methods of teaching in the schools.

Hence, though the heads state that their teachers are "somewhat" following the new methods of teaching, in reality it appears that they are relying upon formal talk and chalk lessons and on dictation of notes as they did before. Practical work by pupils and observation and demonstration lesson are probably utilised while teaching Science subjects. It appears that the heads do not believe very much in activity methods or in minor research work in library as methods of teaching. As none of the heads listed any new method, not mentioned in the list, they seem to be unaware of such methods as group discussions, group assignments etc. as methods of teaching. Though it is being increasingly realised that the formal talk and chalk lesson is one of the worst methods of helping pupils to learn, the heads and teachers seem to rely chiefly on it. Nobody should doubt that dictation by notes is made with rote learning as the objective, and it comes next to formal talk and chalk lessons in schools in order of frequency of use. In short, right methods are not being followed in working out the Multipurpose School curriculum; it is no wonder that the educational goals which prompted the framing of the curriculum are not being realised.

The use of right methods of education, to a large extent, depends upon the availability of proper aids for the purpose, such as text books, reference books, maps, charts, film strips etc. As has been stated before, the majority of the heads (15 in number) are satisfied with the availability of suitable text books. Most of them (19 in number) are satisfied with the reference books they possess for the purpose of working out the curriculum. The situation in regard to maps and charts is not so encouraging: less than half of the heads (11 in number) are satisfied with the maps and charts they possess. In case of film strips, only one head is satisfied with what he possesses.

From the above, it would appear that very good progress has been made in the direction of supplying necessary educational aids



to Multipurpose Schools. Still there is reason to doubt whether the satisfaction of the heads in the above field has arisen out of a proper appraisal of needs for effective education. Take one example. While in answer to one question the heads reply that they are satisfied with the availability of suitable text books, in reply to another question, the names of most of the subjects (both in the core and elective groups) are listed as not having suitable text books. It is not possible for our schools to have sufficient quantities of suitable reference books for use by pupils, simply because of their non-availability in the mother tongue. Again every body knows that we have not as yet been able also to produce a sufficient number of suitable maps, charts etc. as visual aids for teaching different school subjects, however complacent our heads may be in regard to the matter.

Evaluation, is considered very relevant to methods of teaching. In fact, education and evaluation is a single process. We educators cannot continue our educational efforts successfully, without continuously evaluating the effects on the pupils of the educational experiences offered by us. The heads were asked to rate the following types of evaluative methods in order of their intrinsic importance — (i) Standardised new type tests (ii) Essay type tests (iii) Cumulative Records (iv) Rating on a scale (v) Practical tests (vi) Oral tests. Somehow or the other, the heads seem to have great faith in standardised new-type tests; this may be because they are not available for use by them! However, standardised new-type tests receive the highest rating from the heads in terms of intrinsic importance as an evaluation method. Closely following it is essay type tests. Practical tests get the third place while Cumulative Records come after it. Rating on a scale is considered as the least useful method, even less useful than oral tests. Great difference of opinion seems to exist among the heads in regard to the intrinsic importance of the different methods of evaluation. In regard to most methods the ranks received vary from the lowest to the highest. Again, it is significant to note that apart from the case of Essay type tests, every head has not found it possible to express his opinions, probably because they do not have much experience of using the others. It may be mentioned that only 11 heads expressed an opinion in regard to the intrinsic value



of rating on a scale as an evaluational method. From the above, it appears that our heads do not have proper appreciation of the different methods which may be used for improving evaluation work in schools. They are still depending upon the traditional methods of evaluation.

In regard to the frequency of use, it appears from the response of the heads that Essay type tests are most popular, standardised new type tests come next in order of frequency of use. But it seems that the heads have missed the significance of the use of the word "Standardised". So far as our information goes, West Bengal does not have standardised attainment tests save in Bengali and Arithmetic (these also standardised for pupils at the end of class VIII), are only so the heads must have been using adhoc tests rather than standardised ones. Cumulative Records occupies the 3rd place in terms of frequency of use. Rating on a scale is the least used testing method. Again, most of the heads do not seem to believe in cumulative assessment of pupils attainments. It appears from the responses of the heads that only 11 of them use monthly tests, while all, including those using monthly tests, use term tests. This also is not in conformity with the latest educational practices.

The above discussion should have made clear that the heads of Multilateral schools are not satisfied with the curriculum and that it is not being worked out as it could and should have been. The heads were asked to list the weakpoints in the curriculum. It is interesting to note that though they are dissatisfied with the curriculum, they could not pinpoint its principal defects. Some of the heads remained silent on the point; most of them could not point out more than two weak points, (one of which is the general complaint that it is too heavy). It is doubted whether the heads have a good insight into the real problems of the curriculum. However, compiling the points made by all the heads, we come to the following list of weak points of the curriculum, which can be considered fairly exhaustive.

Eleven of the heads complained that the curriculum was too heavy for the average pupil. The complaint is so widespread that it should be considered as genuine. But at the same time, it should be remembered that difficult text books and traditional methods of teaching have made the curriculum more difficult

than it should be. Again defective methods of teaching and cumulative backwardness of our pupils in Secondary schools, make them unsuitable to higher-secondary education. Deficiency in intelligence may also be considered as the cause of the above in case of some pupils. However that may be, it is important to note that nine of the heads felt that 50 per cent of the pupils of their schools are unsuitable to higher secondary education; two heads placed the numbers to 60 per cent and 67 per cent respectively. Only six heads considered less than 30 per cent of their pupils unsuitable to higher secondary education. The solution of the problem seems to be in offering a different type of curriculum to those who are considered to be unsuitable to higher education. In fact, it was the professed objective of a Multipurpose school to offer "terminal" education for them. Unfortunately, the curriculum which has been prepared caters only for those who would enter the Universities. Thirteen of the heads, seem to have realised this defect of the curriculum and have suggested the introduction of a variety of vocational courses. Two of the heads mention that the curriculum is overlapping in certain fields. It is specifically pointed out (though in a different context) that the syllabuses for general Science and elementary mathematics are superfluous to the Science students. Some heads complain of the overlapping nature of the Social—studies Syllabus; one feels that the language syllabuses should be different for pupils of different elective groups. According to three heads, the curriculum is diffuse as well. The social-studies syllabus is offered as an example.

Attention is drawn by a head to the administrative problem created by the existence of X Class schools side by side and the lack of co-ordination between the curriculum of those schools and that of the Multipurpose School.

Two of the heads feel that the Multipurpose school curriculum is unsuitable to the age of the pupils and that it enforces too-early specialisation on the pupils, before their mind is made up. The above hypothesis can be verified only through objective evidences. It is hoped that research will be conducted and such evidence collected. But in the meantime, it may be pointed out that if systematic efforts are made to develop the interests and abilities of pupils (through hobby clubs, career talks



and in other ways), and if scientific attempts are made to evaluate and keep records of their interests, abilities, attainments etc. it may not be considered too early for pupils at 13 to make up their mind in regard to the elective group of study which may suit them most. Again, our present knowledge about the intellectual development of pupils between 13 to 16 (when it is expected to reach near the peak) does make us believe that an University preparatory curriculum should be unsuitable to their age.

One head points out that there is a big gap between the curriculum of the Junior School classes (VI to VIII) and that of the higher secondary classes (IX — XI). But this may as well be due to defects in the Junior School Curriculum. Further a little gap between the two is not unpsychological because of the rapid development in mental life whose full benefit the pupils are expected to reap during their study in higher secondary classes.

Compulsory teaching of second and third languages is considered by one head, as another defect of the Multipurpose Curriculum.

Heads have drawn attention (one in each case) to the following vital omissions in the Curriculum — (1) Absence of provision for Religious education (2) Neglect of Physical education (3) Neglect of aesthetic education.

The heads were also asked to make a list of the strong points in Multipurpose School Curriculum. The following list is compiled from their responses.

1. It is suited to the differential abilities of the pupils (19 heads)
2. It combines general education with special education (7 heads)
3. It provides education for entering life (6 heads)
4. It has given a practical bias to the Curriculum (6 heads)
5. It has provided greater scope for self expression, drive and self effort. (1 head)
6. It is self contained and complete (1 head)
7. It makes knowledge more broad-based (1 head)
8. It sets a higher standard in education (1 head)
9. It reduces the gap between school and college (2 heads)

There is only one head who sees no strong point in the Multipurpose School Curriculum.

It is gratifying to note that the heads of our Multipurpose Schools realise the potentialities of the Curriculum of the Schools. An ideal Multipurpose school Curriculum should have the merits which have been claimed by the heads for it. But claiming these merits for the Curriculum in force reveals lack of insight into it on the part of the heads. For example, the Multipurpose school curriculum is not catering for different grades of abilities, (though it may be catering for different types of abilities), among pupils. As has been mentioned before, the heads themselves pointed out that the Multipurpose School Curriculum is too difficult for the average pupils in our schools. So it cannot be claimed that the Curriculum is suited to the differential abilities of pupils. According to the statement of the heads themselves, more than 50 p.c. of the pupils in a Multipurpose School are unsuitable to follow the Curriculum. Again, as maintained by the heads the curriculum does not provide education for life. The heads themselves maintained that it is suitable to prepare pupils for college education only. It is certain that the current curriculum does not provide terminal education to pupils. The Curriculum does not also satisfactorily combine general education with special education. The special education that is being offered through the elective groups is general in nature. To conclude, it may be said that the current Multipurpose School Curriculum indicates only an approach; it has to be carefully revised, if the merits claimed by the heads for it are to be realised in fact as well as in desire. The development of an effective guidance service in every school is also considered essential for the successful working of the Multipurpose School Curriculum. If the interests and abilities of pupils are systematically developed, if they are given help to properly tackle their educational and personality problems (whenever they arise), and if they are helped to select the elective subjects best suited to their abilities and interests, they should be motivated to accept the educative experience attempted to be offered through the Curriculum; their capacity to accept those experience, should also be greater. An effective School Guidance Service may in



fact be considered as a *sine qua non* for the success of the Multipurpose School idea.

In West Bengal, emphasis is given on the development of the following "institutions" and carrying on following activities for effective functioning of the School Guidance Service —

1. Hobby Clubs — for systematic development of interests and abilities of pupils and also for their assessment and cumulative records.
2. School Guidance Corner — for dissemination of information on Courses and Careers.
3. Career-talk-classes — for dissemination of information on Courses and Careers, through systematic talks.
4. Administration of Psychological tests — for assessing the abilities and attainments of pupils through standardised tests
5. Individual Counselling of both pupils and parents — for helping them to make the "right" selection of elective subjects.

None of the schools, seem to have developed all these institutions or to be carrying on all the above activities though it is believed that they are inter-related and that one cannot be successfully developed or carried on without the other. Counselling seems to be the most popular activity—21 out of 25 schools replied that they were carrying on the activity. Next in the list, in order of popularity, is Career talks. Twelve schools are administering psychological tests and the same number are running School Guidance Corners. Only ten schools have started hobby clubs.

It appears that the schools do not have proper tools for carrying on guidance work. Though 18 schools have claimed to be giving Career talks, only 5 seem to possess (as per response of the heads) the necessary Career literature. Visual-materials for use in the School Guidance Corner, seem to be possessed by only four schools. The possession of psychological test materials by the schools, does not arise, as in West Bengal, they are supplied to the schools on application by the State Bureau. None

of the schools, seem to possess necessary tools for running hobby clubs.

The opportunities for re-allocation of pupils to elective groups and subjects, in case of unsuitability after allocation has once been made, is also important. It appears, except for two schools, all others offer opportunities for re-allocation of pupils, though the time limit within which this can take place differs from school to school. One school allows re-allocation even after one year of study. Ten schools offer the opportunities upto 6 months, the rest within 3 or 2 months. It is felt that the schools should adopt uniform practice in regard to the matter.

To ascertain the broad guidance policy which is being followed in schools, the heads were requested to state who had the last word in regard to allocation of pupils to elective Courses, the school or the parent. It seems that the schools have the upperhand. Only in case of 5 schools, the parents have the last word; in case of 1 school allocation to Courses results from a compromise between the school and the parents. In case of 17 schools, they have the last word in regard to allocation. This also cannot be considered as a satisfactory state of affairs.

The differences between Heads and the parents in allocating pupils to different Courses arise mainly because the various diversified courses do not have parity of esteem in the eyes of the parents, and pupils. The Heads of all the schools unanimously and emphatically stated this. In Boys' schools the Science Course is way ahead of the others in priority of appeal and popularity with both parents and boys, with Technical, Commerce and Humanities Courses a poor second, third and fourth respectively. As a result two thirds of the schools report that their Science Courses are overcrowded and that their Commerce and Humanities Courses have vacancies. In Girls' schools, the Home Science Stream is invariably starved of pupils. Effective functioning of the School Guidance Service may, in course of time, be able to solve the problem to some extent. But it should be remembered that the creation of many courses is not warranted by psychological evidence which exist about differential abilities among men. It is feared that some of the streams will always remain superfluous.



From the responses of the heads, we could gather that they are facing the following obstacles in developing School Guidance Services.

1. Lack of time (mentioned by 4 heads)
2. Inadequacy of Staff (mentioned by 6 heads)
3. Inadequacy of funds (mentioned by 4 heads)
4. Parents' ignorance (mentioned by 1 head)
5. Lack of proper accommodation (mentioned by 2 heads)

From the above replies it appears that the heads have understanding of the guidance problems than of curriculum problems. Most of the heads were silent when requested to tabulate the guidance problems. The few who replied could not touch on more than one or two points. Even when, points made by all the heads are summarised, it appears that they have failed to pin point the principal obstacles in the way to the functioning of School Guidance Services such as lack of proper tools, inadequacy of future training and educational opportunities, absence of sufficient number of Vocational Courses in the Secondary level, absence of parity between different elective groups of study in Multipurpose Schools, large scale retardation among pupils etc. Indeed, the heads have little understanding of what constitutes scientific educational and vocational guidance. Naturally, they have little conviction of its utility.

Though the heads may not be fully conscious of it, one of the important problems of guidance is the unsuitability of a large number of pupils for courses available in Multipurpose Schools. The heads are aware of this unsuitability (though they cannot locate it as a guidance problem). As has been stated before, according to majority of the heads, 50% or more pupils are unsuitable for higher secondary education. According to them, the following are the causes for unsuitability :

<i>Causes of unsuitability</i>	<i>Mentioned by number of heads</i>
1. Poor home background	20
2. Retardation (Scholastic)	16
3. Low I.Q.	14
4. Undesirable behaviour	8

Here as well, over-emphasis on poor background does not reveal proper insight on the part of the heads into the problem of large scale unsuitability of pupils for higher secondary education. Low I.Q. coupled with scholastic retardation and consequent emergence of undesirable behaviour in pupils, according to the authors are the most important causes of unsuitability of pupils in Indian Schools for higher secondary education. In fact, while asked to suggest methods for improving the situation, only six heads, suggested an increase in the number of residential schools, (probably to counteract the negative influence of poor home background), while the suggestions made by others, were more concerned with Scholastic retardation and undesirable behaviour among pupils. The following is the compilation of the suggestions made by the heads.

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*Suggestions for improving the situation Made by number of heads*

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1. More residential schools	6
2. Better Guardian-teacher relationship	5
3. Better pupil-teacher relationship	2
4. Better provision for guidance of pupils in their problems	2
5. Integrated education of pupils in one school from class I to XI	2
6. Special coaching in school	2
7. In calculating varied and healthy interests in pupils	1
8. Scope for more library study	1
9. Longer school day and provision for school meals	1
10. Smaller classes	1
11. Utilising better methods of education	1
12. Reorientation programmes for teachers and parents	1
13. Less amusements in schools	1
14. Diversion of the unsuitable to trade courses after class VIII	1

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*Suggestions for improving the situation Made by number of heads*

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|---|---|
| 15. Elimination of the unsuitable at earlier classes  | 1 |
| 16. State Selection of pupils for higher secondary education on completion of study at class VIII | 1 |
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Many of the heads, remained silent when requested to make suggestions to improve the situation; it seems that they have devoted no thought to the solution of this all important problem of our schools. But, at the same time, it is encouraging to note that the suggestions which have been offered are optimistic in nature. Except three suggestions (14, 15 and 16) others have been offered on the basis of the hypothesis that the unsuitability of the pupils is not an innate phenomenon — it can be improved. Secondly, none of the suggestions which have been offered are difficult to implement. Attention should also be drawn to the fact that some of the heads have old-fashioned ideas about education. For example, one suggested that there should be less amusements in schools. Probably, he is referring to the increased co-curricular activities in schools, now-a-days.

It is interesting to note that though in majority of the schools 40% or more pupils are considered unsuitable to higher secondary education, only a few leave the schools on completion of studies in class VIII (Junior School Stage). As per statements of the heads some schools do not suffer any loss of pupils at the end of the Junior School stage. The loss of pupils in no schools at this stage is more than 15%; in an average the loss of pupils is only 2% to 3%. The percentage of drop-outs is higher between classes IX to XI (about 10% — 15% on an average). According to the information received from the heads, the majority of those who leave school do not enter life or take up vocational training; they enter X Class schools still hoping to have higher education. The introduction of Multipurpose School education has thus not been able to control the rush of the pupils towards University education, irrespective of their capabilities.

That the Heads by and large appeared to feel no responsibility for real or potential early-leavers was shown in their replies to the leading question: What educational provisions would you suggest for such dropouts? Many heads apparently maintained a discreet silence; those who answered the question suggested vocational training in some other institution, thus washing their hands of all responsibility in this matter.

The Heads were asked more pointedly, whether they can offer any special treatment to the backward pupils, because they are the potential dropouts of the schools. More than half of the Heads replied in the negative. The rest stated that they had provision. But when pressed to be precise as to the nature and extent of such provision, they fell back on the vague statement, "individual attention is given to such pupils".

The position of the gifted pupils is not very much better. In answer to the same question about gifted pupils, 17 of the Heads state that they do make special provision for them. But when requested to be precise, they fall back on the same reply "individual attention". Four Heads mention special library work for them.

To summarise the discussions in this chapter, it appears that the present state of affairs in regard to the Multipurpose School Curriculum and its working out leave much room for improvement. The Heads do not believe in the Curriculum which they are entrusted to carry out. At the same time they do not have a scientific insight into its drawbacks, so as to be able to remedy some of them while working it out. They are confused in regard to the weightage to be given to the teaching of different subjects from the point of view of time. Traditional teaching and evaluative methods are being followed in schools. The Heads have little idea about more scientific methods in these fields. Educational and Vocational Guidance which is necessarily connected with the successful working of the Multipurpose School Curriculum is not being satisfactorily carried out. The Heads do not feel concerned either with the education of the backward or the gifted pupils. Education appears to be a dull and mechanical activity which is being carried on without any understanding of the real issues involved.



## CHAPTER VII

### THE ORGANISATION, ADMINISTRATION & STAFFING OF MULTIPURPOSE SCHOOLS

THE SUCCESSFUL working of any human institution is largely dependent on the manner in which it is organised and administered. This is doubly true in the case of a novel and complex educational institution like a Multipurpose school, as experience in both the U.K. and U.S.A. has amply demonstrated.

It must be emphasized from the very start, however, that while the organisation and administration of a Multipurpose school are important, they are not an end in themselves; they are means to an end, the machinery necessary to achieve the overall objectives of the Multipurpose school most economically and effectively.

Hence while our aim should be to devise, as functional and effective a pattern of organisation as possible, we should nevertheless be careful not to be enslaved by it, or to treat it as an end rather than a means to an end.

The ultimate objectives which the administration of a Multipurpose school must be required to promote have been outlined by the Secondary Education Commission, and have been elaborated in Chapter II of this book. As these objectives are complex and many-sided, so will the organisation and administration devised to achieve them tend to be, involving organisational problems and administrative mechanics as well as more subtle problems of human relationships which cannot be solved by the techniques or mechanics of organisation *per se*, however streamlined they may be.

The basic problem of school administration is how best to organise and utilise available resources to provide the fullest possible scope for the development of the individual abilities

and aptitudes not only of an able few but of all the pupils enrolled in the school. These resources fall into two broad categories—material and human—which act and interact upon each other at every stage.

The major material resources that play a part in the successful administration of a Multipurpose school may be dealt with under the following heads: site, area of school grounds, school buildings, equipment and furniture, finance, curriculum, syllabuses, methods of teaching and text-books.

The actual situation of a Multipurpose school is important. Such a school, if located in a rural area, should be situated within a two-mile radius at the most of its 'feeder' Primary or Junior High Schools; and, if it is in a town, should be easily accessible by road transport of various kinds so that it will be in a position to draw its pupils from a fairly wide radius. The school itself should be situated on rising ground with good drainage facilities to cope with the monsoon, and should not be located, whenever possible, in a crowded built-up area.

American School Building experts are of the considered opinion that an area of at least ten basic acres, plus one additional acre for every additional 100 pupils, is essential for a good Comprehensive High School. According to this estimate, each Multipurpose school, if we take 750 as the optimum roll-strength of such a school, would require  $17\frac{1}{2}$  acres of ground. This will obviously be impossible to provide in India, except perhaps in some rural areas; in crowded towns, where suitable new school sites are practically impossible to find, and, existing High Schools have to be upgraded and converted into Multipurpose schools, a school will be very fortunate if it possesses even a quarter or a third of the total desirable school area. Yet some minimum area is essential, so that a Multipurpose school may not only meet its present needs but allow scope for future expansion. This area must be fixed so as not only to make available space for present and future buildings, but also to provide playing fields without which no good school is complete. Taking existing circumstances and limitations into mind it would seem that a basic minimum of at least 5-6 acres is necessary if a Multipurpose school is to measure up, at least to some extent, to the various demands, curricular and co-curricular, that will be made on it.



Whether, in practice, even this minimum area can be provided in the case of most schools is however a moot point !

The proper housing of a Multipurpose school is another important material element in its successful functioning. Where such a school has to be housed in an existing building not much can be done, except by reconditioning and adaptation, or by adding a new building extension. The latter course is preferable, as it is a difficult, expensive, and unsatisfactory from the long-term point of view to recondition old, and, in many cases, out-of-date school buildings. Where a new school is being planned, care should be taken to draw up a Master Plan to be completed in stages so that the new buildings go up according to a settled plan and not haphazardly as is often the case. The plan of any new building or building extension should aim at simplicity, economy and flexibility, and should be, above all, functional. With this end in view, "a school building should be planned from the inside out and not from the outside in," and the architects should draw up the blueprints on the basis of educational needs and objectives determined by the Head in consultation with the staff, in order that the building may be truly functional. A keynote of modern school building should be flexibility of use — by the use of sliding partitions to convert large classrooms into smaller rooms for tutorial work, or the planning of 'multipurpose rooms' which can be put to many different educational uses.

A Multipurpose school building or buildings must make provision for both adequate classroom and special room accommodation. Classrooms should provide a minimum of 15 sq. ft. of room per pupil, plus enough storage space for cup-boards, shelves, tables, etc.; there should also be adequate wall space for blackboard, bulletin boards, etc. Among the special rooms every Multipurpose school should possess are the following:

- (1) An Assembly Hall large enough to accommodate at least 50% of the total roll-strength of the school and fitted at one end with a raised stage and dressing rooms. This Hall will not only be useful for the daily Assembly (if the Hall is only large enough to accommodate 50% of the pupils, the Juniors and Seniors may meet on alternate days for a formal assembly), but can be used for dramatic performance, public

debates, Prize Day, National Day Celebrations, etc. In order that the Assembly Hall may be put to maximum use, it should be divided by sliding, sound-proof partitions into smaller rooms which can be used for special purposes such as tutorial classes, meeting rooms for Clubs and Societies, etc.

(2) A Gymnasium — this should be adequately fitted up and utilised during class hours, with P.T., as far as possible, forming a part of the regular Time-Table of every class, as well as before and after class hours.

(3) At least one large Library-cum-Workroom (preferably two, one for the Junior High School, and one for Higher Secondary classes) with the open shelf system and a full-time Librarian in charge. This library should form the intellectual heart and nerve centre of the School.

(4) A Canteen-cum-Dining room for day pupils. This can be combined with an Indoor Play Centre.

(5) Laboratories with attached Store Rooms for Physics, Chemistry and Biology.

(6) A History-cum-Geography-cum-Social Studies Room.

(7) An Audio-Visual-cum-Exhibition Room fitted up with a screen for projections and Tack Boards for exhibitions of all kinds.

(8) An Educational and Vocational Guidance Room for counselling work.

(9) A Staff room or rooms if there is a mixed staff, which should be attractively fitted up.

(10) A Principal's room with an adjoining Visitor's Room and office rooms for the office staff.

Basic furniture and equipment for the classrooms and special rooms must be simple in design, easily portable, adequate and functional. Audio-Visual aids of all types are an essential part of modern school equipment, and every Multipurpose school should have, *inter alia*, a 35mm Movie Projector, an epidiascope, a Radio, an abundance of Maps and Charts of all types, and many Notice Boards and Tack Boards on which visual material of all kinds can be displayed.

The curriculum of the Multipurpose school consists of all the activities and experiences, both inside and outside the classroom,



which are consciously planned and provided by the authorities to attain the overall objective of this type of school which is to promote the all-round and many-sided development of all the pupils entrusted to its care. This curriculum at present consists of the certain subjects—core and elective—plus various co-curricular activities and experiences recommended as an essential complement to classroom activity. The nature and content of the ideal Multipurpose curriculum, which is the chief material resource for the promotion of the ends of Multipurpose education, has been discussed in Chapter VIII. It only remains here to stress that even the best curriculum and subjects and syllabuses will fail to achieve their purpose unless there is a rich supply of authoritative text-books and reference books of high quality. That there is a serious shortage, quantitatively and qualitatively, of such text-books and Reference books at present in the regional languages has been made obvious from the replies to our Questionnaire. The Central Government and State Government are aware of this grave deficiency and measures are being planned to remedy it. Unless this is done, and done quickly (it can only in our view be achieved by a free and equal partnership between the Government Education Department concerned and private Publishers of repute), the Multipurpose school will lack one of the most essential raw materials for its ultimate success.

The framing of a suitable Time Table for a Multipurpose school presents a very real problem. It is hard enough to fit in all the present required subjects into it—the seven core and 3 elective subjects—but when one has, in addition, to find place for the other subjects and activities that we have recommended—Moral and Religious education, Art, Physical education—and to cater for a variety of essential co-curricular activities, the task appears to be hopeless. An analysis of the Time Tables submitted in response to our Questionnaire revealed certain undesirable features.

- (1) The Core subjects were being given very inadequate time probably because they were not to be tested at the public examination.
- (2) Little or no provision was being made for co-curricular activities.

There does not appear to be any solution to the problem of fitting in everything that must be fitted into the Multipurpose Time Table except by a resort to the following measures.

- (1) The present 40 period week — 8 periods a day for 5 days a week — will have to be extended by another 4 periods, at least in Classes IX-XI, making a 44 periods,  $5\frac{1}{2}$  day week.
- (2) A Day Boarding system will have to be introduced in Multipurpose schools to extend the normal school day from 9 A.M. — 3 P.M. to 9 A.M. to 6-30 P.M. so that due attention can be given to essential co-curricular activities, and they can be welded into an integral part of the Multipurpose school Curriculum.

*The Multipurpose School Time Table*

Given a 44 period week, the following allocation of periods is suggested for Classes IX-XI.

	<i>Class IX</i>	<i>Class X</i>	<i>Class XI</i>
1st Language ..	5	6	8
2nd Language ..	5	6	7
3rd Language ..	3	x	x
General Science ..	4	4	x
Elementary Mathematics ..	4	4	x
Social Studies ..	4	4	x
Art-Craft ..	2	—	—
Moral & Religious Education ..	3	3	3
Physical Education (Excluding Games) ..	2	2	2
1st Elective Subject ..	4	5	8
2nd Elective ..	4	5	8
3rd Elective ..	4	5	8
	44	44	44

*Day Boarding System*

Under this system pupils will remain under the supervision and guidance of the school authorities not only during class hours but during recesses and after school hours, and the normal day will be extended from 3-30 P.M. to 6-30 P.M. An important part of the new scheme should be the provision of a common



Midday Tiffin to all the boys in the School Canteen-Cum Dining Room. This meal will be taken under the supervision of one or more members of the school staff by rotation, the staff members, as they do in the U.K., taking their meals with the pupils and using the occasion to teach them how to be sociable and to develop good table manners both by precept and example. The actual meal served should be simple and inexpensive, and the service during the meal should be provided by the senior pupils themselves on a rotation basis so that they may develop habit of self-help and social service and realise the dignity of labour. In the evening, after class is over, tea and biscuits or chapattis should be provided in the school Canteen, after which a well planned programme of co-curricular activities — organised games of all kinds, team, group and individual, athletic training, the meeting of various clubs and Societies etc. should be carried out from 4 P.M. — 5 P.M. followed by supervised study from 5-15 P.M. — 6-30 P.M. in winter and from 5-30 P.M. — 7 P.M. in summer.

Such a Day — Boarding system, a system that is being satisfactorily worked in a few progressive schools, coupled with an extended school day and a longer school week, will alone provide the time and the opportunity to achieve the many-sided objectives of the Multipurpose school. An obvious alternative to such a Day Boarding system would, of course, be to start more residential schools on the Public School model or the attaching of hostels to Day Schools. But this is an expensive alternative and one that is not likely to find favour with the majority of parents and guardians in India, both on economic and socio-moral grounds for most Indian parents prefer to keep their children at home with them rather than send them to residential schools. The Day Boarding system, on the contrary, will, the authors feel reasonably certain, find a ready welcome among the majority of parents in India who neither have the time nor the facilities to do much for the education of their children out of school hours. Generous Government assistance should be made available to schools to meet the additional expenditure involved in the Day Boarding scheme.

Finally, we come to what is the most important of the material resources necessary for a Multipurpose school, as it is the *sine*

*qua non* of almost all the others, finance. It is true that money cannot by itself provide the open sesame to a good Multipurpose school, yet it can hardly be gainsaid that without adequate financial resources, non-recurring and recurring, it will be possible to set up and maintain such a school, or to achieve its manifold objectives. There are three main sources from which Multipurpose schools can draw the money needed for their establishment and efficient functioning—fees, subscriptions, donations and income from endowments, and Government grants. In the past—the income from the first two predominated in the High Schools of the country, and the third played a relatively minor part. The roles have now been reversed. Government grants of various kinds form the hard core of the income of most Multipurpose schools on the recurring side and with regard the considerable non-recurring capital expenditure, the Central and State Governments are between their meeting about 87½% of the expenditure involved in the construction and equipping Multipurpose schools or school extensions. And it was the unanimous opinion of all the Heads replying to our circular that they expected a continuance of aid to the same degree to implement further development plans where capital expenditure was involved. Government assistance, where recurring expenditure is involved, varies from State to State but all over India there is a tendency for Government grants and subventions of various kinds to increase yearly and to form a growing percentage of the total recurring expenditure of most schools. Fortunately the amount of money made available for Education in the Central or State Government budget since Independence has also increased substantially. While it is far from being adequate to meet the demands in all branches of education, yet where Multipurpose schools are concerned, money has been made available to meet the need for increased recurring and non-recurring grants for the schools. More money will, however, have to be found, especially for strategic improvements under certain heads—for improved salary scales for teachers for the speedy introduction of the Triple benefit schemes (Pension-cum-Provident Fund-cum-Insurance) recommended by the Mudaliar Commission as a means of attracting and retaining good teachers for Multipurpose schools; for a subsidised School Meals Service such as is provided in the



U.K. and U.S.A.; for sponsored co-curricular activities such as games, athletics clubs and societies, etc. which are an essential part of the Multipurpose school curriculum.

An increasing measure of Central and State Government assistance to the schools, while essential, carries with it certain obvious dangers. Since he who pays the piper calls the tune, there has been an increasing tendency for the Central Government to use the power of the purse to impose its views on State Governments, and for the State Governments in turn to impose their views on the schools themselves. This tendency, as we pointed out earlier, is to be deplored; it may bring about some measure of uniformity, but it will also result in regimentation and in the stifling of all initiative, experiment, freedom and variety which are the lifeblood of true education. In the U.K. and U.S.A., Multilateral and Comprehensive Schools are, within a certain broad framework of regulations, free to work out their own salvation. Unless a much greater measure of freedom is given to our own Multipurpose school, and they are freed, as far as possible, from excessive regimentation in the form of minute regulations that stifle all initiative and experiment, it is unlikely that the dry bones of the Multipurpose school will be clothed with flesh and blood and vitality.

Material resources of the various types catalogued in the first part of the chapter, are an essential means to the successful working out of the Multipurpose experiment. But much more important than these, though more intangible, are the human resources which have to be utilised in the Multipurpose experiment. Indeed, it is on the men and women entrusted with the conduct of the Multipurpose experiment, and the complex and delicate pattern of relationships between them, that the success or failure of the experiment will ultimately depend. The human factor can compensate to a considerable extent even for a deficiency of material resources, whereas all the material resources in the world will be powerless to achieve their objectives if the human beings making use of them are unequal to the task before them. The successful administration of a Multipurpose school, therefore, will depend primarily on the calibre and vision of the men and women responsible for its success or failure (the Education Department Officials, the Inspectorate, the Managing



Committees, the Heads and teachers of these schools, the pupils and parents and guardians, and the country as a whole), and on the nature of the relationships between them rather than on methods and techniques of administration or on the provision of inadequate material resources. Drawing on the evidence furnished by the answers to pertinent questions in our Questionnaire, we wish to offer a few reflections on this vitally important matter in the second half of this chapter.

With the growing tendency of State Governments to establish an increasing measure of control over schools, a good deal of power has been concentrated in the hand of the Education Departments and Directorates of these Governments. Increased power, in a social democracy such as ours, should mean a proportionate increase in the sense of responsibility and in the devotion of the officers who the Education Departments and Directorates — he who is the master, must be the servant of all ! In order that they may wield the power in their hands in the real interests of those over whom they have control, such officials must move freely among the schools, and make first-hand, friendly contact with the Managing Committees, Heads, teachers, pupils, parents and guardians and the community at large. Only by keeping their finger on the pulse of the people whom their policies and fiat will affect, will the Education Directorate officers be able to administer the schools under their control with humanity, vision, and a real measure of success. The Inspectorate, which forms "the eyes and ears of the Education Department" and which links the Directorate to the schools has a key role to play in the successful working out of the Multipurpose experiment. Inspectors have a dual task to perform — to interpret and implement in the schools the policies of the State Education Department, and to study carefully the effect of such policies on the schools and report back to Headquarters modifications and adjustments that are necessary to meet the real and changing needs of the schools. Inspectors also have the responsibility of acting as missionaries of new and vital ideas in the schools, of carrying good ideas from one school to another, of initiating significant experiments, of encouraging Heads and teachers to break new ground and of promoting their in-service education and training and of improving the quality of teachers in the



schools. They should also, where possible, help to promote a dynamic and fruitful relationship between the schools and the community, and spread the gospel of new ideas in the community at large. This is a tall order, and unless the right type of Inspectors are found and trained to carry out the above responsibilities, that living contacts between the Education Department and the Schools, between one school and another engaged in a common task, and between the school and community, which are absolutely essential for the success of the Multipurpose experiment will not be achieved, and the chances of the experiment being a real and enduring success will be considerably reduced.

Immediate control over Multipurpose Schools in India is exercised by the Managing Committee or Governing Body. This 'institution' was imported from England, and there is no doubt that a good Managing Committee can be of considerable help in the proper administration of a school. It is equally true that a bad or inefficient Committee can be a positive hindrance. In West Bengal, and many other States in India, Managing Committees consist of representatives of Donors, or of the body founding the school — (a Religious order in many cases, or a Trust), Parents and guardians, and staff, and, generally, though not always, nominated representatives of the Government. Donors or Founders representatives are elected or nominated representatives of parents and guardians elected and staff representative either elected or appointed by rotation. In some cases, the Head is ex-officio a member of the Managing Committee and its Secretary; in other cases he is a full member but not Secretary; in others he is not a member but is entitled to be present at all meetings of the Committee. Mal-functioning of Managing Committees is unfortunately the rule rather than the exception despite the rosy picture painted by the Heads replying to our Questionnaire. Good Managing Committees should consist, as they do in England, of people in responsible positions who are imbued with a tradition of Social service. They should lay down broad lines of policy, but leave the actual administration in the hands of the Principal and Staff. With this end in view and to promote a proper relationship between the two parties, the Head should always be the Member — Secretary of the Managing Committee and should play

a prominent part in guiding its deliberations and shaping its decisions.

In India, unfortunately, a tradition and spirit of service among the more privileged members of the community are, by and large, lacking with the result that Managing Committees become the happy hunting grounds of self-seekers who yearn for power and prestige, or those who wish to manipulate the finances of a school for their own private profit. The principle of election of several members of these Committees, though democratic in theory, also appears to lead to a good deal of unhealthy canvassing that frequently leads to the wrong persons being elected. The remedy appears to be to have a small compact Managing Committee, consisting largely of people selected, because of their real interest in and knowledge of education, from among the donors, guardians and teachers, either by nominations or by co-option, and to lay down that the Headmaster must be the Member Secretary of this Committee. Further, the powers of this Committee should be limited to matters of policy, and it should be clearly understood that it will not interfere with the internal administration of the school which should be left entirely in the hands of the Head and his staff.

It has been said that an institution is but the lengthened shadow of a man. This axiom is perhaps truer of a school than of any other type of human institution, and, more especially at a time like this when circumstances demand the more or less radical reorientation and fashioning of the pattern and outlook of the traditional, unilateral, academic type of High School into the complex, Multipurpose Higher Secondary Schools. The Heads of these schools therefore occupy a pivotal position in the great Multipurpose experiment for on them rests the primary responsibility of giving "a local habitation and a name" to the vision of those who planned the new type of school of the future. Indeed, it is not too much to say that the ultimate success or failure of this significant experiment in the relatively important field of Secondary education, which will mark the final stage in the formal education of the majority of Indian children in the foreseeable future, will depend primarily on the vision, courage and professional skill and integrity of the Heads of the pioneer Multipurpose Schools in the country. Special



care should therefore be taken, wherever possible, to ensure that the right type of Heads are chosen for Multipurpose Schools, and, once chosen, that they be given adequate authority and prepared, through various types of in-service education and training, to shoulder their great responsibility worthily and well.

What should be the qualifications of the Head of a Multipurpose school? In our opinion he ought to be a trained Honours graduate or possess a good Masters degree, have at least five years teaching experience, and be over 30 years in age. But academic and professional qualifications, while important, should not be the only criterion, for the right type of personality is perhaps even more important. Heads of Multipurpose Schools must be men and women of personal and professional integrity, vision and courage, they should be dynamic and flexible in their thinking and liberal in outlook. They must also realise that they are undertaking a difficult, delicate and complex task, and believe that the Multipurpose School experiment, despite its obvious difficulties, is a worthwhile one that can and must succeed; they must also be aware of its many problems and pitfalls, and of possible means of overcoming them which have been tried out successfully in countries like the U.S.A. and U.K. and also in progressive schools in India. Given the right type of Heads, certain pre-conditions are necessary if they are to be in a position to discharge their responsibilities satisfactorily.

The first of these is that Heads should not be subjected to minute bureaucratic control by the Central or State Education Departments or Boards of Secondary Education, and expected to accept, uncritically, policies, programmes, syllabuses and textbooks etc. which they have had no hand in framing. Heads should, through their respective professional associations, be treated as free and equal partners in the Multipurpose experiment by the higher education authorities, and consulted whenever any matter pertaining to any important aspect of Multipurpose education is to be decided. Special seminars, workshops and conferences should also be arranged for them at which they can have a free, frank and full discussion with officials of the Education Department and Secondary Board, and outside educational experts drawn from Universities, the Extension Service

Departments of Post Graduate Training Department and from the ranks of foreign experts.

The overall impression received from the replies to the questionnaire circulated to the Heads by the authors is that there is a good deal of confused thinking, and little or no constructive, let alone imaginative thinking, among the majority of Multipurpose Heads about the great and difficult experiment in which they are engaged. They appear to be largely unaware of the real and complex difficulties and problems inherent in the new pattern of Secondary education, regarding it as but a slight variation of the existing system, instead of a new departure that will involve radical changes, *inter alia* in current values, attitudes, curriculum, discipline and Head-staff pupil and school community relationships. This disturbing state of affairs only underlines the fact that unless Heads are systematically educated, through a planned series of extensive and intensive refresher courses, seminars, workshops and conferences, both by each other and by outside experts from the State Directorates of Education, Universities, and Training Colleges concerning, the real structure of the Multipurpose School, the difficulties they are likely to encounter in making a success of this new pattern of secondary education, and the best ways and means of making a success of the Multipurpose experiment, the entire experiment is likely to be still-born. Only if they have, a real hand in shaping the overall policies of the Multipurpose Schools, as well as in the execution of these policies, are the Heads likely to pull their full weight in making the Multipurpose School experiment a real success.

Secondly, Heads should, subject to guidance from their Managing Committees, enjoy real freedom and autonomy in matters of internal administration and discipline in their respective schools. Such autonomy should not be interpreted to mean that the Heads should function, as so many of them are apt to do, as petty dictators, benevolent or otherwise, in their own schools. Just as the Head has the right to be consulted at all stages by higher authorities on matters pertaining to the Multipurpose experiment, so also have their staff the right to be taken into an active and constructive partnership by the Heads in the working out of the Multipurpose experiment in their respective schools. This partnership in which the Head should be *primus*



*inter pares*, and function as the captain of a team, can best be achieved through regular, well-planned and carefully followed up staff meetings, either of the whole staff or of specialised sections of it. At these meetings, over which the Head should generally preside, there should be a full, frank discussion of various aspects of the Multipurpose School and the problems it throws up, and while the final word must rest with the Head in deciding controversial matters, yet he should be guided, as far as possible, by the consensus of opinion among his staff. This will give the staff a sense of real participation in the running of the school, and not of being hired servants who blindly carry out the directions of the Head, without understanding or agreeing with them.

The responsibilities of administering a Multipurpose School are so many and so complex, and the difficulty of finding men and women with the requisite background of personality, general culture and professional know-how who can guide successfully its various diversified streams so great, that some solution to this problem must be found. The authors are of the considered opinion that the Head needs expert administrative assistance if his task is to be satisfactorily carried out. They, therefore recommend that Departmental Heads should be appointed for the various streams of the Multipurpose School who have the status of assistant Headmasters. On these senior assistants the Head can devolve some of his administrative responsibilities, and they can, individually and jointly, under the overall guidance of the Head, ensure that the various sides of the Multipurpose School are equally well cared for, and work in harmonious partnership with each other.

Both the Head, and his departmental Assistant Heads must work out for themselves a satisfactory distribution of their time between their various duties which fall under the broad heads, general administration, supervision of staff, classroom teaching, interviews with parents and guardians, sponsorship of co-curricular activities, and, last but not least, reading and reflection. Replies to our questionnaire indicate that, by and large, Heads tend to spend too much of their time on routine general administration and on interviewing parents and guardians, and far too little time on what should be their main responsibility — supervision of their staff, with the objective not of spying on them or criti-

cising them, but of helping them to become better and more effective teachers. And, above all, the Head and his Departmental Heads must realise that they are primarily Head Teachers, and that, unless they are "master teachers" and actually spend a part of their day in the classroom, they will degenerate into mere administrators and lose touch with the children in the school and the confidence and admiration of the teachers who will only respect and trust a Head who remains a good teacher.

The relationship of a Head with his staff is a key factor in determining his success or failure as an administrator; another important factor is his relationship with parents and guardians. The Head who believes with the famous English Public School Headmaster that "Boys are always reasonable, teachers sometimes, parents never," and acts up to this formula by keeping all parents and guardians at arms length, will not make a successful Head of a Multipurpose School. Their willing and informed co-operation can only be secured by a Head who is willing to take the time and the trouble to explain what a Multipurpose School is endeavouring to accomplish to the parents and to win their support and encouragement in this great experiment.

A good Head can accomplish much by his vision, drive and leadership only if he is assisted by a capable and adequate staff. Indeed the quality of an educational institution depends primarily on the quality of its staff. No school can rise higher or sink lower than the height to which it is raised or the depths to which it is lowered by the men and women who man it. Hence the future of every individual Multipurpose School, and of the entire experiment, will depend inevitably on the calibre, the vision and the drive, the general culture and professional background of the Head teacher and his team of assistant teachers, it is they who in the final analysis will make or mar this significant experiment in the field of Secondary Education in India.

It is fitting, therefore, that, after considering the Headship of a Multipurpose School, our attention should now be focused on the men and women teachers required to make the Multipurpose School a real and enduring success. Certain questions inevitably come to mind: What staff-student ratio is necessary in order that Multipurpose School should be adequately staffed?



What type of staff should be recruited for these schools? What should be their academic and professional qualifications? What type of personality and character should they possess? And on a more practical level, do the type of teachers we envisage exist in sufficient numbers, and if they do not, what can and should be done to meet the deficiency? And, finally, are salaries and conditions of service in Multipurpose Schools such as to stimulate the teachers in them to give of their best?

It is difficult to frame any hard and fast rules concerning adequacy of staffing in Multipurpose Schools or a satisfactory staff-student ratio. But, broadly speaking, it can be laid down that a Multipurpose School needs a larger and more varied staff, and a more generous staff-student ratio than an ordinary High school. Besides class teachers and specialists in the main languages and elective subjects, such schools also need various other types of essential specialists—a Physical education teacher, a Teacher Counsellor, an Art and Craft teacher, a Music teacher, and a trained Librarian; it also needs a sufficiency of clerical and domestic staff who will free the Head of much of this routine work of administration. The overall staff—student ratio must, as stated earlier, be more generous than in an ordinary High School, a ratio of 1 : 20 is suggested as the minimum.

The academic and professional qualifications of teachers in these schools have been generally laid down as follows. Teachers teaching Classes VI—VIII and the core subjects are generally required to be trained graduates and the senior teachers of the elective subjects in the three top classes IX—XI are generally required to possess an Honours or Masters degree, and preferably be trained. These qualifications are reasonable in our opinion, provided that they are not made a fetish. Many a trained and experienced graduate makes a much better teacher of Classes IX—XI, both with regard to the core and elective subjects, than a raw young Honours graduate fresh from College, and such men and women should not be debarred, if found fit, from the senior teaching post or be denied the salary and the status of senior teachers. It is doubly important that this fact be acknowledged and acted upon at present, for all over India there is a very grave shortage of men and women with Honours or Masters degrees, especially in Science subjects, who are able



and willing to become teachers. In view of the shortage, which is likely to continue for many years, administrators must face up to the fact that trained graduates will have to be relied upon, as they are in fact at present being called upon to do, to carry the main burden of Multipurpose School teaching. It is not fair, and will certainly not add to the chances of the Multipurpose School experiment being a success, to treat such teachers as a necessary evil and to deny them the financial benefits and the status of senior teachers, only because they lack a proper qualification which, without teaching experience, is of very little value. Hence steps should be taken to approve trained graduates having more than five years experience of proven ability as recognised teachers of Classes IX — XI, to provide them with various in-service content and professional courses to make up for whatever deficiencies they possess, such as are being provided for Science graduates in West Bengal, and finally to accord them the same status and salary scales as are being offered to teachers holding an Honours or Masters degree, whether trained or untrained at present. Further, we strongly feel that while Honours or Masters degree may be enough for College teaching, it is not an adequate qualification for teaching in a Multipurpose School. It is our firm convention that a professional training should be a compulsory requirement for such teachers before they are permitted to teach in these schools and that, if they do not possess it, they should be deputed for training within a year or two at the most of their first appointment, and should only be confirmed on the satisfactory completion of this course of training. And, even in the case of trained teachers, graduate or post-graduate, steps must be taken to provide them with various types of in-service education and training of a general and professional nature in order to keep them up to date with the latest advances in their own subject-fields, as well as with the latest of techniques and methods of teaching their respective subjects most effectively.

Suitable academic and professional qualifications, enriched by appropriate in-service education and training, however, while much, are not enough for a successful teacher in a Multipurpose School. Apart from the fact that such teachers should sincerely believe in this new venture in the field of secondary education, and fully alive to its difficulties and challenges, they also require,



as in the case of the Heads, certain essential personality traits such as, among others, imagination and flexibility of mind, and willingness to experiment and launch out into new untried paths, plus, a high sense of duty, integrity, and vocation. Without these traits, even the most highly qualified teacher on paper is likely to fall far short of the challenges implicit in the Multipurpose School.

With the modifications in the qualifications suggested above, it should be possible to attract an adequate supply of trained and experienced graduates and post-graduates to man our Multipurpose Schools. But here a further question arises. Are the salary scales and conditions of service in these schools such as to retain such teachers in the schools, and a stimulus to them to throw their full weight into the task of making a real and lasting success of the Multipurpose School experiment?

There has been a marked improvement in the salary scales to teachers in Secondary and Higher Secondary schools, all over India since Independence. But these scales are still far from adequate in the light of the increased cost of living, and they are certainly quite inadequate to attract first-rate people into the teaching profession. It is mainly because of the unsatisfactory financial attractions of the teaching profession that it attracts, by and large, only second and third class people, and, further, such people, forced by inability to make both ends meet on their salaries, tend to spend much more time than they should on private tuitions, examining answer scripts in public examinations, or running private businesses. These outside activities, and the struggle to keep up with the rising cost of living, tend to sap their energies to such an extent that they cannot give of their best in the classroom and hence neither have they the time nor the energy to shoulder the responsibility of sponsoring and promoting co-curricular activities outside the classroom. Further, while the teachers of Multipurpose Schools are required to have the same qualifications as College teachers, they do not enjoy either their status or their salary scales, nor are conditions of work so favourable. College teachers teach fewer hours, and have longer holidays than teachers in Higher Secondary schools they have fewer corrections, more time and opportunities for private reading and research, and a better status in Society, and.

above all, they now enjoy much better salary scales. Further, they are not generally subjected to the minute, often galling supervision and control by their Heads as are Senior teachers in Multipurpose Schools, and not called upon to shoulder so many extra-curricular duties and responsibilities. Efforts must be made to bring senior teachers in the Multipurpose Schools more on a par with College teachers so far as salary scales and conditions of service are concerned or the Multipurpose School will never be able to compete successfully with Colleges for teachers with the proper qualifications, experience and outlook from the very limited field of ability that is available. The provision of 'fringe benefits,' such as the triple benefit Pension-cum Provident Fund-cum-Insurance scheme suggested by the Mudaliar Commission, staff quarters, and free tuition for their children are also essential if an adequate supply of the right quality of men and women are to be attracted and retained in service in the Multipurpose Schools. And immediate steps will have to be taken by the State Governments and the Universities to provide increased facilities for men and women to take Honours and post-graduate degree at day or evening classes, or through correspondence or vacation classes, and to offer suitable incentives by way of scholarships and stipends to those already in the profession or intending to enter into it to obtain suitable post-graduate qualifications.

The total welfare to its pupils is regarded as the main objective of measures designed to make the Multipurpose School a success; the acid test of these schools will be the extent to which they promote the total welfare of all the students entrusted to this charge, and not only of a favoured few. Yet in the interests of administrative efficiency and economy, the pupils, or at least a section of them, are very often lost sight of or regarded as means to an end. A number of problems arise with regard to the pupils in such schools.

First, what should be the minimum and maximum and optimum roll-strength of our Multipurpose Schools. This is a very important matter, for too many or too few pupils will exercise an adverse effort in a school of this type. In attempting to decide the ideal roll-strength for a Multipurpose School one must take into account, *inter alia* two important factors, the number of



classes in the school and the number of diversified courses provided. It was suggested that every Multipurpose School should provide a minimum of four diversified courses, two College—preparatory higher secondary courses, and two life-preparatory vocational courses, and that it should ordinarily be a six class Higher Secondary school (classes VI—XI) with, wherever possible, its own semi-independent primary section attached to it. If we consider only the Higher secondary section, a Multipurpose School should provide from classes VI—VIII two sections of 40 pupils each in each class i.e. 240 pupils. These pupils at the end of Class VIII will have to choose which of the four diversified courses they will pursue. This problem of classification or selection is the most thorny problem in the Multipurpose School, and upon its successful solution much will depend. In view of its critical importance, it is being given special consideration in Chapter XIII, along with the problem of wastage which is closely linked up with it. Of the 80 pupils available for allocation in Class VIII, approximately 40%—50% will probably be fit to pursue College-preparatory courses, the balance of the pupils should be diverted to the vocation courses. This will give a six class Multipurpose School (classes VI—XI) a maximum roll-strength of 480, if a double section class I—V primary section is added, it would mean another 400 pupils bringing the total roll to 880 pupils. This should be the maximum permissible roll-strength for an all age Multipurpose School, for if the school is permitted to grow any bigger it will resemble a factory.

But the maximum roll-strength is not the optimum roll, for the size of the classes, and sections of classes suggested above are too large to permit of any real individual attention to the children who, both in their classes and in the school as a whole, will tend to be submerged in the group or the mass. The optimum size of classes or sections of classes should in our opinion be 30 which will give a Multipurpose Higher Secondary School, with a primary section attached, a roll-strength of 660 which we regard an optimum roll for a school of this type. Such a school with a staff of 30 teachers, including class teachers and specialists of the types suggested will be able to provide that diversity of secondary education which is essential if every boy or girl in



them is to be provided with the education predominantly general or vocational, suited to their respective abilities and aptitudes.

Problems associated with selection of pupils for the various diversified courses are not the only problems associated with pupils in Multipurpose Schools. Such problems arise out of deeper human problems, such as personality problems, backwardness, maladjustment, and incipient delinquency that afflict many of the pupils of the Multipurpose Schools and which make the problem of selection all the more difficult. Every school should therefore have an effective Guidance Service, staffed by a full time Teacher Counsellor, working directly under the Head, which will identify such problems in time and arrange, in co-operation with the home or other specialist agencies, for their adequate treatment and care. Besides the mental health of pupils, their physical health should also be safeguarded by a School Medical Service, and they should be educated to spend their leisure hours wisely and well. A healthy relationship between the staff and pupils is also an essential pre-requisite to the promotion of the physical, mental and spiritual welfare of the pupils of a Multipurpose School. It is the attitude of the teachers towards them, their interest in their welfare, and the methods they use to teach and discipline them that shape the attitude of pupils towards their school and the type of courses provided in it, and this attitude of the pupils towards the Multipurpose School will be a very important factor in determining their own success in the school, and the success of the school authorities in achieving the overall objectives of the Multipurpose School.

Finally, a significant factor in the successful administration of the Multipurpose School will be the attitude of parents and guardians, and indeed of the community as a whole to these schools, and the degree to which they are willing to extend to the authorities their informed co-operation and active support. That due account has not been taken of the factor by the Heads of Multipurpose Schools is evident from the evidence recorded in Chapter V concerning present relationships between Heads, parents and guardians and the community in general, which are far from satisfactory. It is apparent from the replies to our questionnaire that parents and guardians in general are not aware of the true significance, the educational and sociological



implications and the real objectives of the Multipurpose experiment, so that they tend to be apathetic or hostile towards it, and to regard it as an unwelcome imposition by the Government and the Education Department. It is equally apparent that this ignorance, apathy and hostility of parents is largely the fault of faulty public relations between Educational administrators and Heads on the one hand, and parents and guardians and the community at large on the other, and the fact that the former have taken few positive steps to educate parents and the country at large about various aspects of the Multipurpose School with a view to winning their active and enthusiastic support for the new pattern of secondary education. Parents and guardians and the community at large cannot be expected to understand the advantages and drawbacks, the difficulties and complexities of the Multipurpose experiment, unless these are explained to them through face-to-face contacts, or through the written word by Heads and Educational authorities in simple, non-technical language which they can understand. Hence measures should immediately be set on foot by the Educational Departments and by the Heads of the Multipurpose Schools to promote parental and community education concerning the Multipurpose experiment, with a view to winning their enlightened support and active co-operation. Frequent meetings and closer contact between Heads and teachers on the one hand and parents on the other; individual and group conferences at which the implications of Multipurpose education can be brought home to parents; the initiation and careful nursing of effective Parent-Teacher Associations; popular articles in the school Magazines and newspapers and periodicals; a series of popular lectures and radio talks open to the public; a series of short educational films — these are some of the means by which the educational authorities and heads can make contact with parents and the community and win their enlightened support and co-operation for without such support and co-operation the Multipurpose School will never be a real or lasting success.

The organisation utilisation of the material and human resources in the most effective way possible so as to promote the greatest good of the greatest number of pupils in these schools is the primary objective of the administration of a Multipurpose

School. We hope the suggestions given above will provide, not a cut and dried scheme but guidance as to how this can be done most effectively and economically.



## CHAPTER VIII

### THE MULTIPURPOSE SCHOOL CURRICULUM

#### *Evolving Principles for Curriculum Construction*

NO MAJOR change has ever taken place in the educational system of any country without necessary changes in the content of its education. The curriculum is to-day considered as the crux of any attempt at educational reforms, and so much emphasis is being placed on it that curriculum construction has developed into a specialised branch of study in the science of education.

A functional relationship exists between the objectives and the content of education. The ultimate and immediate objectives of education are derived from the objectives of human life. In the ancient and the mediaeval world there was no marked dichotomy between the objectives of life and actual society, hence no special problems arose in determining the content of education — they could take their origin in the daily activities of the people. But the rapid growth and acceptance of an industrial and technological civilisation by the world during the modern age, with all its resultant complexities, has inevitably led to the development of a dichotomy between the means and the ends of life.

Many of man's day-to-day activities in an industrial society do not contribute to self-development — they may not also be directly relevant to the ends of life. The ceaseless exploitation of nature, to obtain material benefits for mankind and for "earning a living", which are merely means to the realisation of the ultimate ends of human life, keeps the majority of men busy most of the time, and tends to focus their attention on means rather than ends in life. This situation led to the development of a controversy in curriculum construction in regard to the question. "What knowledge is most worth teaching?" What share in the

curriculum should be claimed by "Knowledge of men" and by "knowledge of things" by the "literature of knowledge," and by the "literature of power." The controversy has been carried on under different banners at different times, e. g. Humanities vs Science, Liberal education vs Vocational education, General education vs Specialisation. The ultimate solution to this controversy appears to lie in bridging the dichotomy which has developed between the ends and means in human life. The ends and means of life should be properly integrated, their separation is artificial in any case — and all human activities should contribute to the realisation of the immediate and the ultimate ends of human life.

The total or the Gestalt approach to life and education ended this controversy. It was argued that there was no "liberal" subject for study which did not have a vocational implication; again that there was no vocational subject, the study of which could not have some "liberalising" effect on the personality of the student. The whole issue, and final outcome in the last analysis, depends upon the approach and the method of teaching followed in the case of each individual subject or educational experience. The U.S.A. has coined a significant phrase, "Life adjustment education" indicating the above approach in determining the aims of education. In its report on Vitalising Secondary Education, the U.S. Department of Health, Education and Welfare (1954), defines Life-adjustment education as providing both general and specialised education. The National Commission (U.S.A.) on Life Adjustment Education for Youth, elaborated on the idea and stated that such education has the following characteristics — (1) It is concerned with ethical and moral living, and with physical, mental and emotional health, (2) It recognises the importance of fundamental skills such as to compute, to read, to write, to listen and to speak effectively. It emphasises skills as tools for further achievements. (3) It is concerned with the development of wholesome recreational interests of both an individual and social nature. (4) It is concerned with the present problems of youth as well as with their preparation for future living. (5) It is for all American youth and offers them learning experiences appropriate to their capacities. (6) It recognises the importance of personal satisfactions and achievements for each individual within the limits of his



abilities. (7) It respects the dignity of work and recognises the educational values of responsible work experience in the life of the community. It would be more difficult to draw up a more comprehensive and concrete statement of criteria by which the Curriculum for Secondary Schools may be judged.

The modern development of educational psychology as a science brought a new outlook to the field of Curriculum Construction. The need to "psychologise the Curriculum" began to be felt, which implied that the subject matter of the Curriculum for a particular class should be suited to the stage of mental growth and development reached by the pupils reading in that class. Further, it was insisted, that the pupils should have more or less spontaneous motivation in pursuing a particular course of study. These ideas resulted in the development of a strong movement for breaking through existing subject barriers; the movement began with the attempt to correlate the different subjects in the Curriculum; this was followed by the practice of presenting the subject matter of the Curriculum under certain broad fields; Humanities, Natural Sciences and Social Sciences; the latest idea in the field is to integrate the subject matter of the Curriculum with the needs of the pupils without rigidly thinking in terms of the different subjects which may be studied.

The latest theories with regard to the learning process, and the new conception of education as modification of behaviour through experience, also necessitated certain departures from the traditional concept of Curriculum construction. The Curriculum is no more conceived primarily in terms of subjects but in terms of certain areas and types of experience to be provided, such educative experiences being integrally related to the satisfaction of the principal needs of the pupils.

The latest findings in regard to transfer of learning, also emphasise the important role of methods in education and have established the fact that how learning has taken place is no less important than what has been learnt. As such, a complete Curriculum has not only to indicate the content of education but to give broad directions in regard to the methods to be followed in working it out.

A modern Curriculum, therefore, should consist of the following:

- (1) A clear and comprehensive statement of the needs of the pupils. This has to be done with reference both to the stage of the growth and development of the pupils, and to the type of society in which they live at present and in which they are likely to live in the future.
- (2) A statement of the objectives of education, in terms of the modification of behaviour expected in the pupils rather than of the knowledge which an educated man should possess.
- (3) A tabulation of the types of experience which may be provided to realise the objectives.
- (4) A discussion of the methods through which such experience may best be provided.

From the above, it is apparent that a Curriculum cannot be very specific; it cannot be a mere list of subjects to be studied and a table of contents for each subject. It should be more or less, in the form of a Handbook of Suggestions for Teachers to guide and stimulate them in regard to their work with pupils of different grades, types, and levels of abilities.

If we survey the history of the development of the Curriculum in Indian Secondary Schools, we find that it was drafted on the model of the English "Grammar School" Curriculum. Being a product of the classical and humanistic movement, the Grammar School Curriculum had a strong literary bias. The Indian Secondary School Curriculum imported the same bias. The bias in its case was towards a foreign language i.e. English. Further, like the English Grammar Schools, Indian Secondary Schools catered only for the needs of the prospective entrants to Universities. Naturally such a Curriculum could only serve the needs of a limited number of pupils. Pupils with abilities (e.g. spatial, aesthetic etc.) other than verbal ability had little chance of coping successfully with such a Curriculum. In point of fact, Indian Secondary Schools shut their eyes to the important psychological fact of the existence of individual differences among boys and girls. They allowed little or no scope for the development of diversified talents among pupils.

True there were some modifications of this narrow, one-track Curriculum from time to time. But such modifications were of



a patch work type e.g. the introduction of physical education, art and handwork, science etc. as subjects, and did not fundamentally change the nature of the Curriculum. That it was possible to make — do with such a Curriculum for more than a hundred years was due to the fact that our Secondary Schools had little connection with social needs, and only attempted to cater for the very limited number of pupils who had one type of talent — the verbal and literary.

Further the vital issue of “psychologising the Curriculum” and making it need-centred, and of developing suitable methods for integrating all the educational experiences of the pupils in Secondary schools, was never seriously considered in India in pre-independence days.

Our first task after the attainment of independence was to endeavour to make the schools real community — centred institutions — catering for all adolescents who, it was held, could be expected to benefit by secondary education, in spite of the fact that they possessed different types of talents. Again it was felt that the schools should supply Indian society with suitable persons for the different types of jobs which are being created in it as a result of its rapid industrialisation. The above principles underlie the philosophy of our attempt to start Multipurpose schools and to frame a diversified curriculum for them. But having a long tradition of liberal humanistic education, the Indian mind is generally suspicious of any narrow specialised education. Hence the Multipurpose schools have tried to develop diversified patterns of secondary education on the foundation of a strong humanistic or general education. With this end in view, the Curriculum of a Multipurpose school is divided into two broad areas, the Core subjects and the Elective subjects. Generally speaking, under the head “Core-subjects,” pupils have to read English, Hindi, the mother-tongue or a modern Indian language, Elementary Mathematics, General Science, Social Studies and a Craft; under “elective subjects” every pupil has to opt for three subjects from any one of the following seven groups; Humanities, Science, Technical, Agriculture, Commerce, Fine-Arts and Home Science.

There cannot be two opinions with regard to the advisability of introducing this up-to-date type of Curriculum in our

Secondary Schools. But there is a definite need for us to go into a detailed consideration of the matter and try to determine whether and to what extent the Curriculum which has ultimately been drafted, and is being worked out in our schools, provides scope for improvement:

The Twenty Third International Conference on Public Education, jointly organised by UNESCO and the International Bureau of Education in Geneva in 1960, held the view that when drawing up Secondary School Curricula, the following points must be taken into consideration:

- (a) the various aims assigned to this type of education,
- (b) its structure, whether uniform in character or organised in stages and divisions,
- (c) the relative importance to be given to each subject or group of subjects,
- (d) the environment in which the pupils live and receive their education,
- (e) the pupils' capacity for assimilation, and the needs and interests of their ages and sex.

While fashioning the Curriculum of Multipurpose schools, did the framers keep the above principles always in mind? The obvious answer is no. While suggesting the establishment of Multipurpose schools, the Secondary Education Commission expected that a Multilateral educational system would suit the "wide variety of talents" of pupils who would seek secondary education. It was emphasized that while framing Syllabi, individual differences between pupils should receive special consideration. Do the Multipurpose school Curriculum and Syllabi satisfy the above criteria?

Differences in talents and abilities among pupils may be both qualitative and quantitative. Two pupils may have abilities at the same level but in different fields, one in verbal activities and the other in numerical; they also may have talents in the same field, but at different levels. The Multipurpose school Curriculum syllabi should cater for both kinds of differences. Unfortunately they cater insufficiently for differences in types of ability, and do not cater at all for the needs of pupils who have talents at



different levels. The so-called multitrack education provided in these schools is really single track; all roads lead to Rome; all streams in Multipurpose schools lead to the University. Hence pupils whose abilities are not of the level necessary for pursuing University studies in the future cannot benefit by the existing Multipurpose school Courses,—the courses are far too difficult for them. As has been pointed out in Chapter VI the majority of the heads of the Multilateral schools think that about 50% of the pupils in their school are unsuitable for Multipurpose school education. Further, about 15% of the pupils leave schools between Classes IX to XI, being unable to cope with the Curriculum. Again, the Secondary Education Commission, strongly maintained that our Secondary education should for the greater majority of pupils be an end in itself; it should be a terminal education — i.e. pupils completing secondary education, and not going for higher studies, should be fitted to enter life straight away. The Commission stated that the object of providing diversified courses was to enable pupils “either to take up vocational pursuits at the end of the Secondary Course or to join technical institutions for further training.” Are they doing so? The Survey conducted by the authors, about the state of affairs in Multipurpose Schools in West Bengal, reveal that most of the pupils who leave school, being unfit for higher secondary education, join X Class schools. Quite a few Heads have also suggested the necessity of developing vocational courses in Multipurpose schools to cater for the “Misfits.” It hardly needs saying that at present the products of none of the streams in the Multipurpose school have any direct vocational prospects. Further, the Secondary Education Commission was of the opinion that “the Curriculum must be vitally and organically related to Community life.” Is it true of the Current Curriculum? Our Society at the present moment is mainly in need of vocational skills at the “intermediate level;” by and large we have enough artisans, and far too many University graduates in most fields. The existing Multipurpose school Curriculum provides no answer to the problem of making good this deficiency.

In fact, our Multipurpose School Curriculum and syllabi have been framed with both eyes on University requirements — from this point of view they mark no real departure from those of the

traditional Secondary School. The Multipurpose School Curriculum, as has been made clear from the answers of the Heads to our Questionnaire, is only suited to prepare pupils for college education; it is not suited to prepare them for life. As such, pupils who lack this ability or suffer from cumulative Scholastic backwardness, which is a special problem of Indian Secondary School pupils, and are thus unsuitable for University education, find themselves misfits in our new Multipurpose Schools as they were in traditional Secondary Schools. It may be added that the majority of our Secondary School pupils fall into the above category. In U.K. and U.S.A. Schools of the multilateral type invariably provide courses to suit the varying abilities and talents of pupils at different levels. In fact, the greatest merit claimed for such schools is that they provide "Secondary education for all." The Curriculum in such schools should be of many patterns; for a school a class of a pupil, it is an individual matter. This is not true of our Multipurpose schools. They cannot be called "Secondary Schools for all;" their Curriculum, in spite of the diversified courses is stereo-typed; they are schools suited to the talents of only a small number of the pupils who are pursuing secondary education. They are also completely failing to provide a terminal form of secondary education. Secondary Education, as it always has been, is merely a ladder to University education — it has no purpose in itself, the establishment of Multipurpose schools has not succeeded in reducing the craze of our pupils for University education and Multipurpose school education does not make pupils fit to enter life straightaway. In short, it has not solved any of the educational and social problems of free India which have been outlined earlier in this Chapter.

Multipurpose schools in the true sense of the term, should have two or three distinct types of courses in them — one for those who will be entering the University on completion of their secondary education, and one for those whose talents do not fit them for higher studies. And there will still be a third category of pupils who are not suitable even for these two courses — they may take short Vocational Courses suited to their level and types of talents either in Trade Schools and other Vocational Institutions or wherever possible in the Multipurpose Schools themselves. Attempts are being made at present, contrary to the views



expressed by the Mudaliar Commission; to provide the second type of courses in special institutions such as Junior Technical Schools. We consider that in keeping with the Multipurpose school idea as elaborated by the Secondary Education Commission and as worked out in the U.K. and U.S.A., they should be provided within the Multipurpose schools themselves. In fact, some of the States e.g. Rajasthan, in the case of the Technical Stream have already made such provision.

We should also critically re-examine the basis for the provision of seven types of Courses in our Multipurpose schools. Ostensibly, it has been done to cater for the different types of abilities existing among pupils. But psychology fails to offer any evidence concerning the existence of seven types of abilities suggested by the names given to the "Seven Streams." The provision of Commerce, Agriculture and Home Science Streams, particularly do not have any psychological sanction behind them; they can only be justified because such vocations exist in society. As such, the courses for these streams should be vocational in nature; on completion of the course, a pupil should be able to enter a vocation or an allied training (e.g. Nursing or Catering in case of Home Science). It may be noted that there are many Vocations at the "intermediate level" in Commerce, Agriculture and Home Science, for which Vocational education up to the Higher Secondary stage should be considered adequate. It is true there are professional courses at the University level as well for higher vocations in these fields; preparation for entering them could be made through the Humanities and Science Streams, with the addition of the necessary elective subjects. It may be added that too narrow a specialisation or vocational training need not and should not begin in the Higher Secondary Stage for those going on for further studies at the University level. Professional institutions of University level do not require it. A concrete proof of this is the fact that many Engineering Colleges e.g. Sibpur Engineering College, West Bengal, in their admission tests are giving preference to "Science-students" over "Technical-students;" this would appear to render the technical stream, as it is now constituted, virtually superfluous. The same is also true of the 'agricultural' stream as students of the stream are not being given

preference to students of the science-stream in admission to Agricultural Colleges.

On the basis of the above considerations the following concrete proposals are made for the re-organisation of the existing Curricula and courses in our Multipurpose schools.

(a) Every Multipurpose school should provide *at least two* broad types of Courses:

- I (i) Firstly there should be a group of College — Preparatory Courses which will provide “general education with a vocational bias;” these courses will not aim to provide terminal education, but to prepare the pupils for University education in general or for professional courses at the University level. They should be provided on the basis of differential abilities among individuals for the existence of which we have reliable psychological evidence as far as the most up-to-date findings of psychology go. To be more specific, we may have four courses or streams — Humanities, Science, Technical and Fine Arts — under this Category.
- (ii) The Syllabi for these courses should be modified to meet the requirements of the higher courses of studies for which they are expected to prepare pupils. For example, if the Engineering Colleges feel that pupils in the Technical Stream should know more pure or Applied Mathematics than it is provided in the existing syllabus, the syllabus should be modified accordingly. With this specific end in view the syllabus for every subject in every stream should be critically re-examined by expert Committees of Heads of Departments of Universities and Professional Colleges in a State.
- (iii) The vague phrase “vocational bias” should not create confusion in our minds — it should be clearly understood that these courses are a preparation for certain specific types of higher courses, which, in their turn, will lead to specific types of vocations. It should also be borne in mind that mere provision for “practical work”, though it may have educational merits, irrespective of the requirements (both in nature and standard) of training courses or



vocations for which it is a preparation, may not give a real vocational bias to a course. Take for example, Shorthand and Typing in the Commerce Stream. These skills have no cultural value and are not required for pursuing a University Course in Commerce. Further, the *Quantum* of skill developed in them in the Higher Secondary Course is far from adequate to become a Stenographer. Hence a strong case can be made for dropping Shorthand & Typing as elective subjects for pupils wishing to go for higher studies in Commerce.

- (II) Secondly, the Multipurpose School should provide courses for vocations which require education and training up to what may broadly be called "Higher Secondary Standard" and for which there is pressing social demand should be provided in Multipurpose Schools e.g. Engineering Courses of different kinds (Radio Engg., Refrigeration Engg. etc.), Shorthand and Stenography Courses for Secretaryship; Courses for Catering, Dietetics and Home management etc. Such courses should be framed in close and continuous consultation with the industries and trades concerned and will have to be modified from time to time.

The framers of the Multipurpose School Curriculum fell between two stools in trying to effect a compromise between the apparently conflicting demands of general and vocational education. It was but natural that a nation with a long-standing, deep-seated traditional concern for general education should be over anxious to retain its pride of place in the High School Curriculum, even though it had to yield to sociological and economic necessities in making provision for various types of specialised education. It is further not surprising that the framers of the various syllabuses forgot the vital principles enunciated by the 23rd International Commission on Public Education that to avoid overloading, the introduction of new subject matter into that Curriculum should be offset by the removal of other matter which had become redundant or of less importance, and that every syllabus should offer a selection of essential topics rather than accumul-

ation of material. They did not sacrifice any of the traditional subjects or subject matter, though they had to introduce new ones and new material. The result was that they served neither the traditional nor the new subjects. The traditional subjects had little socio-economic relevance and hence they were not studied with the same zeal as the special subjects, which had much greater utility and relevance. The study of the special subjects, on the other hand, could not be carried to the extent the logic of the situation demanded because of a shortage of time and also because of an unwillingness to admit that an attempt was being made to provide special (vocational) education. It did not occur to the planners of the Curriculum that by merely giving a slender vocational bias to certain courses, they cannot make Multipurpose education "terminal education" in the true sense of the term.

It is necessary for us to remember that, as has been pointed out, in the Report of the Harvard Committee on "General Education in a Free Society", the strong belief that there exists a basic contradiction between general and vocational education has developed because of historical reasons. In its attempt to clarify the true relationship between these two complementary types of education, the Committee writes, "It (general education) is used to indicate that part of a student's whole education which looks first of all to his life as a responsible human being and citizen; while the term, special education (vocational education), indicates that part which looks to the student's competence in some occupation. These two sides of life are not entirely separable, and it would be false to imagine education for the one as quite distinct from education for the other...." Again, it is a well known saying in the field of education that there is no real general education which has no vocational implications, and no true vocational education which has no liberalising influence.

Under the present set-up in Multipurpose schools, the Core subjects, which provide general education, cover over 50% of the total course. There is complete unanimity of opinion that the load of the core-subjects on the pupils is much too heavy, and that full justice can only be done at the cost of the elective



subjects. At the same time attention may be drawn to the fact there have been very significant omissions from the list of core subjects which have been recommended for higher secondary school pupils.

For example, physical education has been left out of the list. There can be no two opinions that in the present context of the physical health of our pupils, physical education needs to be specially stressed in our schools.

Again the Curriculum in Core-subjects for Multipurpose schools does not appear to have given adequate place to aesthetic education. It provides for craft education, but not for education in Art. Aesthetic education is considered important for personality development; as such, it is suggested, that education in art should be correlated with the education in crafts.

The provision of moral and religious education is also a must in our Secondary schools. It is a psychological truth that adolescents hunger for a philosophy of life. Moreover, it cannot be denied that morality and religion in our society are rapidly on the decline — the old values are being lost, and new values are not being substituted. Further, the old agencies for moral and religious education, like the home and the temple or mosque, have largely ceased to be effective while new agencies have not taken up their work. Under the circumstances, it is becoming increasingly evident that to continue to deprive our schools of moral and religious education will be a tragic blunder. In this connection, attention may be drawn to the Report of the Committee on Religious and Moral Instruction, 1960, (appointed by the Ministry of Education, Govt. of India) which was of the considered opinion that, inspite of obvious practical difficulties and obstacles, "The teaching of moral and spiritual values in educational institutions is desirable, and specific provision for doing so is feasible within certain limitations".

The addition of physical, art, moral and religious education to the list of the Core-subjects (as suggested) will, we realise, lead to a further increase of the already burdensome load on pupils. The solution of the problem in our *opinion* lies in making proper approach to the handling of the Core-subjects. Influenced by our past traditions, we seem to have forgotten that education in Core-subjects must be practical and life-centred;

instead we have made it bookish and scholastic, defeating the purpose for having education in these subjects and unnecessarily increasing the subject matter load of study on the pupils. In this connection, attention may be drawn to the pertinent observation of the Harvard Committee on General Education, that general education is not necessarily associated with the study of certain subjects. The *raison d'être* of general education is the initiation of all adolescents to the culture of the society in which they live. This can best be done through a need-centric syllabus mainly worked out through real life projects and activity methods. An attempt to frame this kind of syllabus has been made in the case of Social Studies. The attempt has not been over successful, mainly because the syllabus has not been presented sufficiently concretely in terms of the units or projects, through which it could be worked out, and the literature required for the success of working this new type syllabus (through projects) has not been developed.

The class-room, as it stands at the moment, is also not a suitable "institution" for working a need-centric syllabus through project-methods. Further no deliberate attempt has been made to extend its influence by developing suitable 'institutions,' (e.g. the Social Studies-Club or Society with its excursion group, dramatic group, etc.) which functioning within the school time-table will help towards the successful working of this kind of syllabus.

In view of the above deficiencies, failure to attain the desired success in working the recent Social studies syllabus should not prejudice us against a need-centric approach to this and other Core subjects syllabi. The following suggestions are, therefore, offered in regard to the reorganisation of the "Core Curriculum," on the basis of discussion above:

- (a) Efforts may be made to offer the necessary general education to pupils, through a single integrated syllabus under the head "Everyday Life." This syllabus should replace the syllabi for social studies, Mathematics, General Science and Craft. The syllabus for Everyday Life, should also include provision for Physical, Art, Moral and Religious education. There may be two types of syllabus for "Everyday Life" — one for pupils offering Humanities, Fine-arts



or Commerce, and the other for those offering Science, Technical, Agriculture and Home Science as the, elective stream. The Syllabus should be a need-centric one, framed in terms of projects. Half of the syllabus should be devoted to practical work and half to related theoretical studies. In regard to weightage in terms of marks, 200 marks may be assigned to the syllabus, one hundred to theoretical studies and one hundred to "practical work." The assessment of pupils in the syllabus should be left to individual schools as is the practice in West Bengal in regard to Social studies, Mathematics, General Science and Craft at present. But, the Board of Secondary Education, should see that 'institutions' necessary for the successful working of the syllabus are developed in school, and sufficient time is provided in the overall school time-table both inside and outside the class-room for their successful functioning. The Board may also appoint Regional-Assessors who will visit from time to time a group of schools assigned to each, and to whom specified practical work of the pupils may be submitted, with a view to introduce some kind of check on the work of the schools. It is contended that this type of Syllabus will serve the purpose of initiating the pupils to the culture of their society better than what is being achieved by cramming them with four different syllabi (with 400 marks) at the present moment.

- (b) The syllabus of every elective subject should be so modified as to allow some scope for general education. For example, in the syllabuses for the Science Stream, the study of the History of the subject and biographies of some of the scientists may be included, while making provision for the study of their special contributions to Science. It should be an accepted principle in the construction of curriculum for special subjects that in providing for the study of any topic, scope should be given to bring out its implications to humanity and its cultural values. This principle should be closely followed in modifying the syllabi for the elective subjects; this will allow scope for "general education," while studying the elective subjects.

- (c) There should be specific directions in regard to the minimum extra-class 'institutions' to be developed in a school and the types of work to be undertaken by them in an academic session to enrich the cultural life of the school. Such activities should be considered as a part of the content of education (syllabus) and they should be organised for groups of pupils not exceeding 40 (more or less like the "class group"), so that the activity and experience may be shared by every body in the group.
- (d) The number of compulsory languages to be studied also contributes appreciately to making the load of the "Core subjects" too heavy. The Hindi-speaking States appear to be more fortunate in regard to the study of languages; at present they provide for the study of only two languages the Mother tongue (Hindi) and English. But the non-Hindi-speaking States have to include Hindi over and above the Mother tongue and English in the list of languages to be studied. This introduces discrimination between pupils of Hindi speaking and non-Hindi speaking States in regard to the total load of the Core-curriculum in general and the portion set aside for languages in it in particular.

In support of our contentions, it may be relevant to describe here the practice in American Schools for offering general education (called as education for citizenship). In many schools effective citizenship has become a functional responsibility of the total school staff and all instructional areas have some responsibility for citizenship education. Staff planning provides for the inclusion of different phases of citizenship in class and extra-class experience..... Problems of Community health are taught in Science and Health classes..... Many problems of home finance and consumer education are studied in classes of mathematics, science etc..... Pupil-teacher planning provides group experiences in formulating and solving many types of problems. Committee work takes place in all classes. Continuously groups of pupils are presented with alternatives so that they may learn to make decisions. The general atmosphere of the school is



democratic; class procedures are consistent with democratically developed school policies.

Passing from the Core Curriculum to the elective side of the Multipurpose Curriculum, attention needs to be focussed on the fact that the study of any elective group in a Multipurpose school should mean preparation for fairly specific objectives. The idea of keeping the contents of the specialised portion of Multipurpose education rather "general," with the object of giving it greater flexibility so that pupils entering University courses may have a greater number of choices before them is not working in practice. For example, it is practically impossible for an average "Technical Student" to get admission to a degree course in Science; the same is also true of the average Commerce or Fine Arts student seeking admission to a degree course in Arts.

Further, Multipurpose Schools should give up their effort to prepare University-bound pupils for certain types of vocations through their elective courses, (preparation for these may begin at the University stage), and rather concentrate on ensuring that the second broad group of pupils for whom they are catering — those who will complete their formal preparation for life at school — acquire sufficient vocational fitness to face life with confidence. They should also continuously keep in mind that the apparent struggle between general and vocational subjects is an artificial one. The Harvard Committee Report pointed out, "The heart of the problem of general education is the continuance of the liberal human tradition. General education is not necessarily related to the study of certain subjects (Languages, History, etc.) Hence even the syllabi for vocational subjects may be so framed as to give pupils for whom a terminal education is being provided a general understanding and appreciation of our culture. The long and short of the whole matter is this, that the diversified courses of the Multipurpose schools for all pupils, but especially for those being provided with a life-entrance education, should have greater social relevance. They should have specific objectives from the social point of view. Such social objectives need not interfere with individual development of pupils; they need not also cramp the development of the cultural life of the pupils.

Entering into further details of the overall course of studies prescribed for our Multipurpose school, the first thing which



strikes one is the extraordinarily heavy language load in the Core Curriculum. The All India Council of Secondary Education in its draft syllabus suggested the study of a modern Indian language (other than Hindi) by Hindi-speaking pupils over and above the study of English and the mother tongue to equalise the language-study-load of Hindi and non-Hindi speaking pupils. In certain quarters, the claims for the inclusion of a classical language (e.g. Sanskrit) among the "Core-subjects" are also being advanced. Very recently a specially appointed Committee in West Bengal recommended such inclusion. The problem of determining the number of languages which may be studied in Higher Secondary Schools is proving a ticklish one. The Secondary Education Commission recommended the study of two languages [(1) Mother tongue and Regional language or a composite of the two (2) English] but the All India Council of Secondary Education — (in its Draft Syllabus), on the basis of the suggestion of a Special Committee, recommended the study of three languages [(1) Mother tongue or Regional Language (2) English (3) Hindi or Modern Indian Language]. In practice, the schools in Hindi speaking States are working on the basis of a two-language formula, while those in non-Hindi speaking States are working on the basis of a three-language formula (as suggested by the A.I.C.S.E.); but many of the States have not as yet been able to reconcile themselves to giving up the study of a classical language as a Compulsory subject. An attempt is being made to *justify* the study of more than one language; the mother tongue on the ground of social-relevance; English to be studied as an international language and as the language for higher education and research; Hindi to be included because it is to be the Federal Language; Sanskrit cannot be left out as it is the language of culture. Further, attempts are being made to justify the introduction of 3 or even 4 languages for pupils in Secondary schools and to prove that all pupils are capable of learning three languages by reference to European countries, such as Switzerland and Belgium, where it is alleged pupils learn three languages (French, German, English). We do not know of any reputable educational experiment to discover the number of languages which may be learnt in the school by the average child without being over-burdened. It is a well-known fact that if languages are in the environ-



ment, the child can pick up more than one language orally, almost spontaneously. But it should be clearly realised that apart from speech, reading and expressing oneself in writing in a language, even if it be one's mother tongue, are new and difficult skills, and they cannot be acquired so naturally and easily. Introducing additional languages in very early years may complicate rather than solve the language problem particularly when none of the additional languages are in the environment of the child. Moreover, it is not sufficiently realised that in Secondary Schools in the U.K., U.S.A. and the Continent only a small minority of pupils of high intelligence study one or more languages other than the mother tongue.

The "language-problem," to the distress of our Secondary School pupils, is proving almost impossible of solution, because of the confusion of political issues with academic issues. It is forgotten that in Switzerland and Belgium, it is not so difficult for pupils to learn even three languages, because the languages concerned have considerable affinities among themselves (similar scripts etc.) and because they are "living" in the society. It is *perfectly* true that if in the same family, the mother speaks one language and the father another the child will become bilingual almost from birth. In India, the situation is *found to be* completely different. The additional languages to be studied are usually not in the environment of the pupils; there is often little affinity between the languages to be studied and the mother tongue; last of all, we lack suitably qualified language teachers who speak the language which they teach, and who have learnt how to teach it as a "foreign" language. Under the circumstances the learning of 3 or 4 languages in Secondary schools by all pupils with any degree of efficiency seems to be absurd. Our long standing and bitter experience in learning English as a second language, despite the time and energy spent on it, should have convinced us of the very great load which has to be shouldered in learning even one second language with sufficient proficiency.

The contention that the load would not be very great if a language is studied as a "language" and not as a "literature" (i.e. attempts at appreciation may be left out while studying it) does not also appear to be very sound. It is doubted whether such a thing is possible. It is believed that a language cannot



be profitably studied without appreciating what is studied; if such an attempt is made, the study of a language will become dull and more difficult. Again, if a language is learnt it should be learnt with such efficiency that it becomes meaningful in life; this means that the power of comprehension and expression should develop to the extent that they may be utilised in actual life situations. Further, if English is to be learnt so that it can be vehicle for higher studies and research the language will have to be *mastered* to a relatively high degree of proficiency. Under the circumstances, the study of more than two languages at the Secondary school stage does not seem to be feasible. In actual practice, the Hindi-speaking States have already adopted this two language formula of Hindi and English. West Bengal provides for the study of a third language (Hindi or a Classical language) but its study is only started in Class VI and not carried beyond Class IX, the subject is then dropped, after an internal examination. This is playing little more than lip service to the study of the third language. Such inadequate study of any language can only result in wastage.

The whole problem of language — study in Secondary schools has arisen from the attempt, mainly for sentimental reasons, to dislodge English from the pre-eminent position which it has hitherto occupied. Without being drawn into political controversies, it may be said that secondary school pupils should not be asked to shoulder the burden of studying more than two languages; this is the practice widely accepted all over the world. The unsoundness of forcing Secondary School-pupils to bear the burden of learning three languages will become clearer when we consider that we have already increased their load (both in quality and quantity) by introducing specialisation (without any sacrificing of general education) in the Secondary school stage. It is therefore highly desirable that we revert to the considered verdict of the Secondary Education Commission in regard to the study of languages.

At this stage it may be interesting to draw a comparison between the curriculum for Multipurpose schools as suggested by (a) The Secondary Education Commission and (b) All India Council of Secondary Education and that actually adopted in two States.



Table for Comparison

<i>Sl. No.</i>	<i>Area for Comparison</i>	<i>S. E. Commission</i>	<i>A.I.C.S. Education</i>	<i>Syllabus in Rajasthan &amp; Punjab</i>	<i>Syllabus in West Bengal</i>
1.	Languages	<p>(1) Mother tongue or Regional Language or a Composite course of both</p> <p>(2) One other language — English, Modern Indian or Modern European. Both Examination subjects</p>	<p>(1) Mother tongue or Regional Language</p> <p>(2) English</p> <p>(3) Hindi or a Modern Indian Language</p> <p>All the three Examination Subjects</p>	<p>(1) Hindi or Punjabi</p> <p>(2) English</p> <p>Both examination subjects</p>	<p>(1) Bengali, English, Nepali or Urdu or a composite course of a recognised Language and Elementary Hindi</p> <p>(2) English or Bengali (the pupil should select the language which he has not offered under the first group).</p> <p>(3) Hindi, Bengali or a recognised classical language. The pupil cannot offer any language more than once (Non-examination subject studied for one year)</p>
2.	Other Core subjects	(1) Social studies for those who would not take up allied subjects	(1) Social studies for all; for three years — Examination subject.	(1) Social studies for all—3 years Examination subjects	(1) Social studies for all 2 years Non-Examination subject.



among their options i.e. for the Science, Technical, Agricultural & Home Science Streams	(2) General Science for all; for three years — Examination subjects	(2) General Science for all — 3 years Examination subject	(2) General Science for all 2 years Non-Examination subject.
(2) To be studied for two years — non-examination subject	(3) Elementary Mathematics for all; for three years — Examination subject.	(3) Mathematics for all; for three years Examination subject	(3) Elementary Science for all 2 years Non-Examination subject.
(3) General Science including Mathematics for those who would not take up allied subjects among their options i.e. Humanities, Commerce and Fine Arts, Streams. To be studied for two years — non-examination subject.	(4) Craft — 3 years for all — Examination subject.	(4) Craft for all 3 years Examination subject.	(4) Craft for all 1 year Non-Examination subject
(4) Craft for 4 years including Middle school — not stated whether it would be an examination subject — for all			
Elective subjects — 3 from any group; one additional from any group.	Elective subjects — 3 from any group; one additional from any group.	Elective subjects — 4 from any group;	Elective subjects — 3 from any group; but another subject may be taken by those who so desire.



It will be noted that Secondary Education Commission did not suggest the inclusion of Hindi as a compulsory language to be studied; it advocated a two-language formula. In fact, all the Hindi speaking States are working on this formula and have rejected the suggestion of A.I.C.S.E. for inclusion of another modern Indian language as the third language to be studied. It is interesting to note that Punjab, a bilingual State, has not made Hindi a compulsory subject of study for those who offer Punjabi as the language to be studied; it has rejected the claim that the federal language should be a compulsory language for study for all pupils at the Secondary stage. Though West Bengal is trying to work the three language formula, by including Hindi or one of the classical languages in the list of compulsory subjects for study, the language has only to be studied for one year in the higher secondary stage and it is a non-examination subject. It seems that an effective study of three languages (not to speak of four) in the higher secondary stage (along with other subjects to be studied) is almost an impossibility—it should not be attempted under any circumstances. And, last but not least, politics should not play a part in determining the curriculum of our schools.

A closer study of the table given above reveals that the Secondary Education Commission was also more rational and more scientific in its suggestions concerning the other core subjects to be studied, and its conception of the syllabi for those subjects was more need-centric. For example, by suggesting a single syllabus for Mathematics and General-Science, it visualised a practical course of study which would be relevant to every day life; such a course would be studied through actual life situations. A similar syllabus was visualised for Social studies, a fusion of History, Geography, Civics and Sociology. Declaration of these subjects as "non-examination subjects" is also significant. It indicates that the subjects were to be studied for their own sake; the interest of the pupils in them should be self-sustaining. Only a need-centric syllabus worked out in terms of projects can be expected to fulfil these demands. The A.I.C.S.E. destroyed the spirit and unity of the Core Curriculum by splitting up the composite course in General-Science and Mathematics into two subjects; the declaration of Social studies, General-Science and

Mathematics as examination subjects also served the same end. It is felt that our suggestion of making a composite, need-centric syllabus of General-Science, Mathematics, and Social Studies and Craft and designating it as Everyday Life would be more in the spirit of the suggestion made by the Secondary Education Commission in regard to the core subjects.

Besides the necessity to reorganise and streamline the general lay-out of the curriculum for Multipurpose schools, there is scope for improvement in almost every individual syllabus framed by the A.I.C.S.E. on which model various State Governments have drawn up their own syllabi. Our first *reactions on critically* examining the syllabi individual is that they are old ideas in new garb, making the task of education more difficult than it had been before.

Take for example, the syllabus for Social studies — (I) The Objective in offering a course for this new "Subject," was to provide an integrated life-centred experience which should lead the pupils to a better understanding and appreciation of the social environment in which they live. But the syllabi framed by most States, seem to be mere suggestions for the theoretical and parallel study of History, Geography and Civics separately. (II) The original idea was that the child should be led to the understanding and appreciation of his social environment in the context of world environment. But in actual practice, World Geography and World History have been introduced in the syllabi of most States as isolated subjects for study. (III) Naturally, no attempt at understanding the social environment can be made without having some experience in regard to the economic, political and sociological aspects of society. But if these experiences are to be meaningful to the pupils they should be concrete, derived directly from their immediate environment. But unfortunately, the syllabi of most States offer suggestions for theoretical studies alone. It is not surprising therefore that the pupils and teachers, and parents as well, are smarting under the load of such a syllabus and find it sometimes beyond the limit of their intellectual abilities. The following table is presented to illustrate from the syllabi of a few states the points made above.



## LOOP-HOLES IN SOCIAL-STUDIES SYLLABI OF STATES

<i>Name of the State</i>	<i>I. Isolation of History, Geography &amp; Civics as subjects</i>	<i>II. Isolation of World History and Geography, from Local History and Geography</i>
Punjab	Syllabus divided into Paper A & B. Geography and History in Paper A, Civics in Paper B. In Paper A, study of Geography is provided in separate sections (Section I & III — the first for Indian and the second for World Geography).	World Geography and History are provided in Sections III & IV respectively of Paper A, without any reference to Indian Geography and History (Save one in case of history under the head "First Contacts of India with the West")  Section III of Paper B is also devoted to World Problems (World War, U.N.O. and Interdependence of the World)—but there is no special mention of India here as well
Rajasthan	The whole Syllabus is a study of History — the problem of integrating it with Geography and Civics does not arise.	Though the topics in Indian and World History are presented in rather an integrated manner in the Syllabus, they are most arbitrarily separated for study by prescribing that in Higher Secondary Examination questions relating to India would be asked in Section A and those relating to rest of the World in Section B —

Further, the latest principles for syllabus-construction were not followed in framing the various subject syllabi for Multipurpose schools. Though the contents of the syllabi have been modernised to some extent their method of presentation have remained traditional, making them too difficult for the pupils. It is unfortunate that the syllabi were not prepared by specialists in the field — by those who have made a scientific study of the problem of Curriculum construction. It is interesting to note in this connection,

that the International Conference on Public Education, referred to before, specially emphasised that the preparation of curriculum for secondary education should be entrusted to specialised bodies on which teachers should always be represented — it should not be the work of professors, who have no technical knowledge of the work. As before, the Syllabi prepared appear to be mere lists of topics to be studied with suggestions of books from which they may be studied; syllabi of this type encourage excessive verbalism and rote learning. The syllabi do not state the educational objectives which they desire to achieve by prescribing lists of topics to be read. Under the circumstances the syllabi, which should be really means to an end, become ends in themselves. Further, the syllabi apparently prescribe reading as the only type of experience to realise the educational objectives of Multipurpose schools.

A syllabus, constructed according to scientific principles should, at the start, specifically state the objectives which it desires to achieve. Suggestions should then be made of the different specific types of experiences which the pupils may receive to realise each of these objectives. Reading should certainly form one kind of experience which the pupils should receive, but it must be supplemented by other kinds of experience. For example, in prescribing a syllabus for History at the Higher Secondary stage if one of the objectives to be realised is to develop the Causal sense in History among pupils, a few debates, discussions, sessions for mutual questions and answers will undoubtedly be a more effective experience to realise the objective, than a mere study of text books, or worse still *cram* books. In this type of Syllabus, attention is continually focussed on the “educational objectives” to be achieved by the syllabus as a whole and by each individual part of it. The teachers have the liberty to vary the experiences to be provided for the pupils, according to needs — so long as the educational objectives are being realised, he is on the right track. As such, this type of syllabus only offers general direction, leaving enough room for flexibility. The targets for providing educational experience are specifically fixed in the Syllabus, but only general suggestions are offered as to how the targets may be reached. Examinations (internal and external) on such syllabuses are directed to testing whether the specified objectives have



been realised or not. They do not try to test directly the knowledge of the reading materials which may be suggested in the Syllabus for realising the objectives. As such, in educating, greater reliance has to be placed on experience which have a better transfer value in learning. The Syllabus contains suggestions in regard to the different types of experience to be provided for pupils and also in regard to the methods for providing them. This is all the more necessary in our country, as teachers, whether trained or untrained, are not as yet acquainted with the latest methods and practices in education. It cannot be too strongly emphasised that syllabus construction by itself has become a science, it is a specialist job. The work cannot be done scientifically if entrusted to lay hands. Unfortunately, the Multipurpose school-syllabuses in most of the States, have been framed by University Professors who were not specialists in Curriculum construction though masters of the content of their respective subjects. As a result, the syllabi are merely lists of topics for theoretical study. The topics are not even framed in a manner so that they may appear purposive. Take for example, the History Syllabus (elective) for Rajasthan: The syllabus in Indian History, provides a list of five books which may be read, and states "Indian History from the earliest times to the present day". This cannot be called scientific syllabus construction by any standard. Such a syllabus cannot bring the reorientation in secondary education for which the Multipurpose School have been set-up.

To concretise the principles to be followed in scientific syllabus-making, a section of a model History Syllabus (elective) is outlined below:

### Syllabus for Indian History (Elective)\*

#### Classes IX to XI

#### I. Objectives for studying Indian History during the grades:—

- (a) To know the principal "historical facts", which have contributed to the development of Indian Society.

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\*It should be noted that the syllabus outlined is merely illustrative.

- (b) To understand the causal relationships existing among "historical facts" which contributed to the significant developments in Indian history.
- (c) To appreciate the contributions of historical personalities to significant developments in Indian history.
- (d) To know and understand the significance of time-sequence between "historical facts".
- (e) To know and understand the significance of geographical location of "historical facts" in Indian history.
- (f) To understand how history is constructed with the help of "original sources".
- (g) To develop the interest of pupils in history.

II. Types of Educational experience which may be provided for the realisation of the objectives while dealing with the *Mughal Period*.

- (a) Studying the "facts" in regard to the following historical events while trying to understand Causal relationships between them (including time sequence and geographical location) from books suggested.
  - (i) Growth of the Mughal Empire.
  - (ii) Downfall of the Mughal Empire.
  - (iii) The three battles of Panipat.
  - (iv) Shershah's attempt to bring about the downfall of the Empire.
  - (v) Roles played by the Rajputs in reference to the Mughal Empire.
  - (vi) Roles played by the Marhattas in reference to the Mughal Empire.
  - (vii) Development of administrative system during the Mughal period.
  - (viii) Development of Art during the Mughal period.
  - (ix) Social and cultural life during the Mughal period.
- (b) Study followed by group discussions in regard to the contribution of the following:
  - (i) Akbar in stabilising the Mughal Empire.
  - (ii) Aurangzeb in weakening the foundations.



(iii) Shivaji in building up the Marhatta power.

(iv) Akbar and Shahjahan in developing Mughal Architecture.

N.B.: The class may be divided into four groups with one of the topics assigned to each. The results of the discussions may be presented to the whole class; they may be written and put up on the wall newspaper.

(c) In the "history Scrap book" time lines may be drawn of following topic from Section (a) — I & II, IV, V.

(d) Maps may also be drawn in the History Scrap book to illustrate the same topics from the same Section.

(e) Significant passages from Baharnama, Tuzuk-i-Jehangiri, Akbarnama Ain-i-Akbari, Badaoni and such other original sources may be collected in the Scrap book and appropriate inferences may be drawn from them. There may also be discussions in the class on them; such discussions may sometime take the form of group game — one group giving a quotation and challenging the other to draw the inference.

(f) A list of interesting books (biography drama, poems etc.) relevant to the period for study (which might have been read) may be made in the Scrap book and interesting passages quoted.

(g) The history Scrap book should also contain the following:

(i) Collection of pictures of important historical personalities with appropriate headlines at the top and notes at the bottom.

(ii) Collection of pictures of specimen of Mughal Architecture with appropriate notes.

(h) There may be two or three debates on controversial issues — Every pupil should prepare for participation (keep notes about his role in the scrapbook) though he may not be actually called upon to debate.

A Syllabus in Indian history as suggested above should be treated as merely illustrative. The suggestion which is being offered is this that every syllabus should be re-examined, (a specialist in syllabus construction should be associated with the work), and re-

drawn according to the latest principles of syllabus construction. While presenting the syllabus it is usual practice to offer suggestions of books to be read. This is more important in India where such suggestions for books give meaning and substance to the topics listed in the syllabus and where both pupils and teachers rely so heavily on such books in working out the syllabus. A new type syllabus would call for new types of books as educational aids. It should be noted that preparation of educational aids (including that of "text books") is as much an expert job as the framing of syllabi. Our "text-book" writers are not usually specialists in education. The result is this that their treatment of the syllabi (in text books) makes the task of education doubly difficult. One suggestion for remedying this state of affairs is to have text books written by specially appointed committees of experts. But this does not seem to be feasible; a single book would not be adequate for a syllabus; further, society does not seem to take kindly to this suggestion. Under the circumstances, the only way out seems to be to provide sufficient hints in the syllabi for preparation of books, which should serve as special educational aids to them. One way of providing such hints, is to draw the syllabi in the manner suggested above. The objectives tabulated for drawing up a syllabus, should also regulate the text book-writer in his task. Every item in a syllabus may be taken as a whole (unit of experience) and treated in the text book as such. Besides, after discussing a particular unit, there should be suggestions for other types of experience which may be provided for realising the "objectives" so far as this particular unit is concerned.

Further, one or more "text-books," are not adequate as educational aids for working out the new type of syllabi. Various kinds of reference book will also be essential for different parts of the Syllabus. For example "Abstracts from Source books" is essential for working out the section of the syllabus presented as illustration. Other types of aids such as, a book of maps and time-lines, the "Mughal pictures" and the like are also essential for successful working of this section of the syllabus. The syllabus, should therefore offer suggestions for the different types of aids which may be required for its successful working.



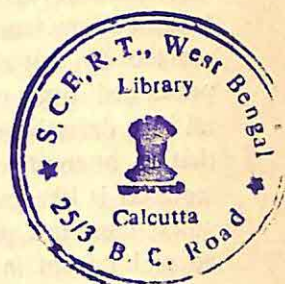
Success in working a syllabus is very much related to the nature of "examinations" (both internal and external) taken on it. Examinations should be closely related to the objectives and types of experience provided for in the syllabus. A syllabus which clearly states its objectives and specifically lays down the experience to be provided for the pupils should be able to control examinations to a greater extent.

It should also be evident that examinations on the type of syllabus that has been suggested for the Multipurpose school, cannot merely be on the theoretical knowledge acquired by the pupils; they should also try to evaluate the effects of other kinds of experience received by the pupils. In short, there must be both theoretical and practical, oral and written examinations in every subject. Practical examinations in some subjects may consist of the examination of "Scrap books" Diaries, Note books and similar evidence of "practical work" submitted by the pupils.

The principle of staggering the Higher Secondary School examination particularly in regard to the core-subjects also needs to be more widely accepted. Unless we are trying to test merely the rote memory of pupils, there is little meaning in pupils being compelled to take examinations in all the prescribed subjects together. Learning, in the true sense of the term, becomes a part of the personality and acquires transfer value in life, even though the experience which has resulted in the learning cannot always be repeated with parrot-like precision. Hence, it should be sufficient to evaluate the effect of an experience, after it has been taken, instead of waiting till the effects of a number of experiences can be evaluated together. In fact, schools, who do not take annual examination, and decide the suitability of pupils to be promoted to next higher grade on the basis of "Weekly tests" are working according to the principle. This is certainly a more scientific principle which may be followed also in case of external examinations. Hence it is suggested that the syllabus should contain both general and specific notes about evaluation. Education and evaluation are both continuous processes and they can never be separated. In India, we are used to over emphasising evaluation; education is very much being controlled by evaluation. Hence for the successful working of the syllabus, evaluation should be considered as a part of the process. There should be

a general note in the syllabus in regard to the manner in which evaluation (both internal and external) should be carried out.

In short, the syllabus should take the form of a "Hand Book of Suggestions" for teachers, as it is worked out in more progressive countries.





## CHAPTER IX

### TEACHING AND EVALUATION IN MULTIPURPOSE SCHOOLS

A CLOSE and integral relationship exists between the contents of education, and teaching and testing methods; this has been emphasised in the previous chapter. The Secondary Education Commission noted that the best syllabus can be made unworkable by unimaginative methods of teaching, while the worst syllabus can be made to work, utilising better methods. The oft-heard remark from teachers that the Multipurpose School syllabuses are too difficult and that they cannot be "finished" within the prescribed time originates largely from the fact that they are utilising defective methods of teaching. It must be clearly realised that to attempt to work out a new syllabus in terms of "old methods is like patching a new garment with old cloth, and that unless there is a parallel reform in the realm of teaching methods, no real reform in syllabuses will be possible or desirable.

The great American educational philosopher — historian Brubacher writes, "How to transform the child's ignorance into understanding is the educational problem beyond all others that has stood most persistently at the educator's elbow through out the long course of educational history. In simplest terms, this problem has taken the form of determining the most effective things the teacher can do in order to get the child to modify his ways of behaving."

Fortunately, the development of educational and social psychology, especially during the last three decades or so, has placed at our disposal, a wealth of scientific knowledge, on "how to modify human behaviour." The problem now is to develop progressive methods and techniques based on the above knowledge which may be successfully used in schools. The use of *such*

“scientific methods” in the education of pupils has become specially important because of the latest findings in regard to the debated problem of the transfer of learning. A good teacher cannot rest contented, even though the method followed by him has produced immediate results — mere acquisition of knowledge by pupils is not enough; the knowledge acquired must have a ‘transfer value.’ It has been experimentally proved that such transfer in learning takes place best when learning is acquired through scientific methods. Indeed it may well be said that how a thing is learned is as important as what is learnt, the utilisation of the “right-methods” has therefore received top priority in modern education. The Secondary Education Commission acknowledged this by stating that in modern education, “the emphasis therefore shifts from the quantum of knowledge to the right methods of acquiring it.” This *basic truth* should never be forgotten.

A Multipurpose school endeavours to educate the whole man; its syllabuses are or should be essentially need-centric ones — there is a “whole” approach in regard to anything which is offered to pupils. Such syllabuses, both individually and collectively, can never be worked out with success, unless methods which ensure the maximum transfer in learning are used by teachers. If the Multipurpose school syllabuses appear to be unworkable, it is largely because the traditional Indian method of rote-learning, which secures the least transfer in learning is being utilised in trying to master them. Further, Multipurpose schools do not merely aspire to modify the behaviour of pupils in a single field, the field of knowledge; it aspires to shape their attitudes and values and also to develop their latent skills, interests and abilities. These are new objectives for our schools, but unfortunately our teachers do not know of any method for achieving the new objectives and have no tradition to fall back upon. Under the circumstances, they are clinging to the methods used in imparting knowledge to pupils, even though the objectives to be realised are very different. This has created a well-nigh hopeless situation, and has brought the Multipurpose school experiment to the brink of failure.

Speaking of the prevailing method of teaching in our schools, the Secondary Education Commission remarked that it is exces-



sively dominated by verbalism. Teachers have a tendency to identify knowledge with words; they *labour under* the fond delusion that if a student is able to memorise or repeat certain words or phrases, he has grasped the facts or the ideas that they are meant to convey. This delusion has led teachers to practice the most primitive method for education i.e. Imitation and Memoriter.

According to this method, "to repeat" and "to teach" are synonymous terms. In the class-room the teacher repeats before the pupils what is contained in the text book, and at home the pupils read the words of the text book again and again till they are committed to memory. The method used by the teacher is that of "Lecturing" rather than "teaching", a method followed in Europe during the middle ages, mainly because of historical reasons. For since the teacher was usually the only person who possessed a book, he repeated the words of the book to the students who, in their turn, took notes of them.

Such a method, at its best, took the form of the "prelection initiated by the Jesuits in the 17th Century. This was a variety of the lecture-method — it was a sort of preview of the lesson to be read from the text book. In the prelection, the teacher gave an extended and carefully prepared prereading of the passage, the students taking notes to enable them subsequently to remember the salient points of the prelection. The "ideal method" which most of our Teachers' Training Colleges endeavour to impart to their trainees is also a method of exposition. It may be termed a "Conversational method", which is in essence a variety of the dialectical method followed by Socrates in teaching his students. As contrasted to the other methods described above, it does not try to transmit knowledge as such, but leads the pupils to find it out through conversation with the teacher.

Such methods have their good *points*, but they are by and large ineffective and out of date at *the present day*. The modern problem of instructional methodology has shifted its emphasis from finding better methods of exposition to devising more skilful ways to motivate learning. Besides the methods of "exposition" practised in Indian Schools are the worst possible, and the slightly more progressive Training College methods, though relatively less unsatisfactory, have not penetrated deeply or widely into the

practices of schools. The average Indian teacher, trained or untrained, is a slave to verbalism, he talks continuously in the class, and expects that the pupils have learnt what he has talked about. He asks the pupils to read relevant portions of their text books again and again till they have committed to memory the subject matter dealt with. He gives verbal "explanations" of "difficult things" in the lesson, and expects that the pupils have comprehended them. And, further, as the knowledge of the teacher himself in the subject matter is poor, he usually repeats the words of the text books in his attempt at "prelection".

Again, the text books, being of inferior quality, according to any standard, the lessons given by the teachers have negative rather than positive value in education. The interest of the pupils in the lessons is destroyed; sometimes wrong information is given and pupils develop undesirable behaviour because they have been kept inactive in unpleasant situations for long hours and forcibly fed with inert knowledge, hour after hour, day in and day out *ad nauseam*.

Methods of exposition, even at their best, have little psychological basis. When a unit of knowledge, verbally presented by the teacher, is accepted by the pupils, the psychological process which makes it possible is called "Suggestion". The indiscriminate use of the power of suggestion to induce certain behaviour in pupils is undesirable mainly because the behaviour induced by suggestion is usually mechanical in nature, the person behaving having little insight into his own behaviour. Besides, suggestion cannot be really effective unless made with full conviction, and unless there is extremely positive relation between the suggester and the suggestee. These conditions were fulfilled in ancient and mediaeval times. The relation existing between the preceptor and the disciple in those days is proverbial; the preceptor spoke with conviction and authority and the pupil literally hung upon his lips. As such, the methods of exposition worked fairly well. But in modern times, particularly in case of Indian schools, the situation is reversed. In most cases a negative or hostile relation exists between teachers and pupils; further, instead of speaking with a conviction and enthusiasm that spring from the master and love of these subjects, in many cases the teachers themselves do not understand what they are speaking but merely repeat parrot-



fashion what is in the Text-book. It is interesting and tragic to note that the teacher, being ignorant of the psychological basis of the method he is using, often wittingly or unwittingly destroys his relationship with his pupils before he begins his exposition or offers various suggestions. For example, many a teacher enters the class, speaks damagingly of the performance of the pupils in the last exercise written by them, threatens them, with failure in the examination, and then undertakes to give an exposition of the mistakes committed by them. In the event, if the efforts of teachers to educate their pupils, produce opposite results, because of the working of counter—suggestion, it should surprise no one. Even a lecture can be made educationally more effective—if the lecturer is aware of process of suggestion at work in the audience listening to his lecture.

Another psychological process at work, when pupils try to learn from the exposition given by teachers, may be described as “rote learning”. This is what Thorndike’s rat attained in his Learning Experiment when it learnt to escape from the maze. By frequent repetition, we can develop “habits”—the S—R bond according to Thorndike—which enable us to reproduce what has been heard or read. Such “habits” however, can be developed only if and when the learner is strongly motivated in the case of Thorndike’s experiment, the hungry rat in the maze desired to get at the food kept outside. Corresponding motives in our pupils if this method of teaching is followed, could be to secure a reward or to avoid a punishment.

In the present social and school set-up, examination success is regarded as the *summum bonum* of a pupil’s life. Most of the rewards and punishments for inducing learning in pupils stem from success or failure in examinations, hence examinations are naturally considered as the best incentive for learning. It is openly said that the pupils will not be motivated to learn a subject if they are not to appear *in it* at a public examination. It should be pointed out that rote-learning has little “transfer-value”; it is so limited that it may not extend from one page of the book to the other, not to speak of from one subject to the other, or from school situations to life situations. Rote-learning necessarily increases the load for learning, it also rapidly lapses due to “disuse”. Again, a learning process motivated entirely by a



prospect of rewards, or threats of punishment cannot foster a really satisfactory relationship between the teachers and their pupils.

The Multipurpose School syllabuses in short appear unworkable to us, mainly because of our failure to utilise proper methods for education in schools. The underlying purpose of the syllabi for the core subjects was mainly to initiate the pupils into the culture of the nation, and the effectiveness of such courses of studies will depend mainly upon their ability to cultivate in pupils the power of appreciating cultural values and to develop in them necessary attitudes for functioning effectively both as individuals and as members of the society. The transmission of knowledge, so far as these subjects is concerned, appears to be an indirect objective. Hence the educational methods which should be used in dealing with such subjects should ensure the maximum transfer — value of learning, from one subject to another, from knowledge to personality traits, and from school to life. To facilitate this, it was suggested that existing subject barriers should be done away with wherever possible e.g. by combining, History, Geography and Civics, under the title "Social Studies" and integrating different branches of Science under the head "General Science". Lecture, prelection, and rote-learning through repetition are obviously not suitable methods to reach the desired goal; the syllabi for core subjects should be life-centric, and they should be mainly worked out through need-centric, concrete real life experiences as far as practicable.

Again provision for elective subjects in the Multipurpose School Curriculum had been made with a view to lay a foundation for later specialised studies at the University or in professional institutions of further education. The knowledge acquired through the study of these subjects should be *therefore* broadbased, so that it may be utilised in acquiring further knowledge in them. This implies that the knowledge gained should have a transfer value from one study situation to another, and hence the development of certain personality traits, such as a love for the subject and its special discipline, should also be cultivated to realise the objective. Hence rote-learning is not very helpful even in regard to the study of elective subjects, and if we make provision for truly vocational subjects in the elective streams of our Multipur-



pose schools, the problem of transfer of learning would probably be greater in working out the syllabi for those subjects.

In short, the methods followed in working out Multipurpose school syllabi at the moment are largely defeating the purpose for which they were drawn up; the syllabi appear to be absurd and unworkable, because they were framed in one spirit, while they are being worked out in a different one.

The Secondary Education Commission pleaded eloquently for the adoption of "Dynamic Methods of Teaching". The teaching methods adopted by a good teacher must be dynamic; they should vary according to the teaching-problem and the type of pupil and teaching situation faced by the teacher. Teachers endeavouring to follow dynamic methods of teaching should note carefully the following principles in regard to the psychology of learning. Firstly, motivation is the key to learning. No learning can take place unless the learner is adequately motivated to learn, and such motivation should be spontaneous, arising out of the natural needs of the learner, rather than derived or forced that is induced through threat of punishment or prospect of reward. The problem of educational methodology in modern times has largely reduced itself to devising suitable ways and means to motivate learning.

Secondly, learning occurs as a result of the self-activity of the learner, undertaken to reach the goal or to satisfy the need which has led to the development of the learning situation. Strictly speaking learning cannot be imparted from one person to another, it is the resultant of the experience undergone by the learner in the effort to satisfy his needs. Hence another problem of educational methodology is to present the learning problem in units of graduated difficulty, so that the learner may be able to solve them through his own efforts. It may be noted that with the solution of every problem, there is growth of learning, enabling the learner to face the next problem, which may be more difficult to solve with greater confidence.

Thirdly, in his efforts to solve the learning-problem, the learner may receive different types of experience, of which verbal communication is one; this is generally the only type of experience which the learner receives in most of our schools. Unfortunately this type of experience is least effective in inducing learning.



Verbal experience is an abstract type of experience in which the whole personality of the learner is seldom involved; he may even undergo this type of experience without any real involvement at all. Active participation in solving a learning problem, is a concrete experience involving intellectual, emotional and manual activity is a much more effective learning experience. Hence another problem of educational methodology is to devise ways and means to bring about the active participation of the learner in solving the learning problem. Rightly did the Secondary Education Commission emphasise the utilising of "Activity Methods" in Multipurpose Schools.

Fourthly, the latest research findings in regard to transfer of learning emphasise the vital importance of following the "right methods" in teaching. Learning may occur through different types of experience, but transfer in learning cannot be expected unless it takes place as a result of receiving the "right type" of experience. Further, in order to secure the maximum transfer in learning, it is useful to build up the necessary generalised attitudes, habits, values etc, in the learner.

The Secondary Education Commission emphasised the development of three main objectives of educational methods — (a) The educational methods followed should lead to a broadening of the interests of the pupils (b) They should develop in the pupils the capacity for clear thinking (c) They should develop in the pupils love for work. To this list may be added the development of the habit of self-help, and the personality trait of sincerity in application etc. Hence, another problem of educational methodology is how to develop the generalised attitudes, habits, etc., necessary for securing transfer in learning.

Fifthly, social interaction in schools develops learning problems for pupils, and also provide the means for solving those problems. Experiences received through social interaction are most powerful in inducing learning. In fact, some of the most effective learning in schools takes place as a result of social interaction. It should be specially remembered that suggestion works as an educational method only when there is a very positive relationship between the teacher and the pupils. Proper relationships between pupils and teachers, and also between pupils



and pupils, are therefore fundamental in securing desirable and effective learning in schools.

What concrete steps can we take to secure the working out of the above principles in our current and future school practices? For a start, new types of experience should be provided to develop in pupils the attitudes, work-habits & personality traits necessary for securing the largest measure of transfer in learning. With the above end in view, our class-room practices should be modified. Passive learning should be reduced to a minimum & students should be made more active. They should also accept greater responsibility for work inside the class-room procuring equipment, preparation of visual materials, arrangements in the class-room, mutual help in education etc, should be accepted by the pupils as their own responsibility. Every pupil should bear some responsibility for organising the varied educational experiences which may be provided for the pupils in his class. It may be noted in this connection that the necessity of developing a therapeutic community, in which mentally ill patients accept responsibility for helping fellow patients is gaining ground in work with pupils suffering from mental ill health. This approach should be much more relevant to educational work. A school should be developed to be co-operative educational community, where everybody helps everybody else to receive education — where mutual interaction takes place between teachers and pupils themselves. Class work may be organised on the basis of mutual help. The teacher, contrary to the present practice, should keep in the background as much as possible. He should present a lesson to the class as a problem to be solved; the pupils may then be divided into different problem-solving groups each with a specific assignment. And while he is playing the role of the leader in class-room activities, the teacher should not only be concerned with the acquisition of knowledge by the pupils, he should also pay due attention to the development of desirable attitudes, work habits and personality traits etc., among his pupils.

New types of activities other than those which take place in the class-room should also be introduced in schools, and suitable 'institutions', through which they may be organised, should be developed to achieve the above end — the starting of different



types of pupil clubs and societies providing opportunities for participation of all the pupils in the school in a variety of co-curricular activities may be cited as an example to illustrate the above point. The outmoded distinction between curricular and co-curricular activities should no longer be maintained. All school activities are purposive in so far as they contribute to the realisation of the overall school objective. Though they may appear to be different types of activities, they are complementary rather than contradictory to one another; one cannot be given up without detriment to the other. In this connection it should be noted that co-curricular activities serve curricular interest; if proper personality traits and work habits are developed through participation in them, the pupils will do much better in their curricular activities. And teachers would, surely agree that in general standards in schools are declining because the majority of pupils lack such personality traits as obedience, initiative, sincerity in application etc.

To secure greater motivation in learning, the schools should systematically try to develop a strong and enduring interest in their pupils in school work. Deliberate efforts should be made in the class-room to achieve this end. Special 'institutions' in the school should also be developed with the above objective in view. This has become more important with the diversification of courses in Multipurpose schools, enabling pupils to adapt courses of study to their interests. Unfortunately pupils in our country do not get necessary experience, either at home or in society or in school, for development of real interests on the basis of which they may opt for one or the other of the streams in Multipurpose schools. Provision of diversified courses in Multipurpose schools will be largely meaningless unless systematic efforts are made in schools to develop the potential interests of pupils. These may be done through starting "Hobby clubs" in schools, particularly for pupils from Class VI to Class VIII, in terms of the streams in Multipurpose schools, and running hobby clubs, according to proper methods, should be given equal importance to taking "classes" in "Curricular Subjects".

In short, the Multipurpose schools should realise their changed and changing roles in terms of the changed social and educational set-up of the country — they must realise that they



are no longer merely places for imparting academic knowledge, but are also institutions for the development of interests and personality traits of pupils. In fact, even the effective imparting of knowledge to pupils is not possible unless the necessary personality traits and interests are developed, beforehand or side by side.

A word may pertinently be said here in regard to the optimum number of pupils for a class group, a co-curricular activity group, or a hobby club group. It is often forgotten that we have outgrown the stage when our slogan was to "individualise education". We need not lament unduly the extent to which we are over-crowding our classes. There is no doubt that every individual pupil needs living contact with the teacher, and that his education should be according to his abilities, interests, attainments, needs etc. But, at the same time, it should be remembered that every pupil also learns from interaction with other members of his group, and that even in cases when a group of pupils are engaged in a common activity, there is scope for every pupil, to choose activities according to his interests, abilities etc. Further, it may be pointed out that in modern times tools have been developed, e.g. Ability tests, Standardised Attainment tests, Diagnostic Attainment tests, Attitude Scales, Diagnostic Personality Tests, etc. by which the individual variation among a group of pupils can be more economically, from the point of view of time, and effectively detected with a view to vary the educational experiences for them; tools are also available (e.g. Programme learning and Self-study graduated activity exercise-books) which can offer educational experience to a group of pupils according to individual requirements. Taking all factors into account it is felt that 40 may not be too large a number for membership of a class group, co-curricular activity group or hobby club group, though 30 may be considered as the optimum number for the purpose. In this connection it should also be noted that in order to develop interactions between the pupils through group activities, membership of class groups etc., should not be too small.

In view of the first principles outlined above, it is obvious that the class-room as an institution is not adequate to carry on even the academic activities of the school according to the

latest methods and principles of education. Every Multipurpose school should therefore in addition strive to develop the following institutions to achieve its many-sided purposes.

An auditorium and Audio-visual room. It is now universally accepted that audio-visual methods of receiving experience are very effective in education and modern technological developments have increased the effectiveness of these new media. Further Radio programmes and Film-shows are very popular in our social life and can be effectively harnessed as a means to education.

A School Museum, which should be divided subjectwise. The pupils will receive educative experiences while collecting or making materials for the museum. Presentation of materials in the museum according to topics being discussed in the class should be entrusted to pupils and considered as an educative experience for them. The materials in the museum may also be utilised for class lessons. In short, maintenance of a School museum would provide opportunities for practising activity-methods in education, and for concretising abstract lessons. Like the School library, the School museum, should form an invariable part of modern school equipment for education.

An Exhibition Gallery. Exhibitions focusing attention on some topic or the other, should always be a feature of the School Exhibition Gallery. There should also be provision for setting up selected exhibits in class-rooms. The school as a whole, and every class should have a few bulletin-boards for presenting visual materials systematically for educative purposes. The pupils can and will learn through participating in the preparation of the exhibits, and also in presenting them.

A central Library with branches e.g. Class-Libraries, Subject-Libraries, a Hobby-club-Library etc., we have already accepted the principle of having a library for every school. But unfortunately school libraries are not as yet properly organised and effectively utilised. Library work should be considered as important as class' work; one should be correlated to the other. Pupils should be given a share in planning and organising at least the branch libraries and in the actual selection and care of the books.



A remedial educational centre for every subject. This has become a necessity in our schools because of the wide-spread scholastic backwardness caused, *inter alia*, by the use of defective methods of *teaching*. The majority of the pupils in an average school suffer from scholastic backwardness; some of them suffer so severely that most of the class activities appear meaningless to them. The cumulative weight of scholastic backwardness becomes so heavy for the majority of the pupils by the time they reach the end of junior school stage (Class VIII) that they become almost uneducable. Under the circumstances it is necessary that an "institution" should be developed in every school in which pupils reading in Classes VI to VIII (at least) and suffering from severe scholastic backwardness would receive special help in overcoming their backwardness. It may be noted that undesirable behaviour often accompanies scholastic backwardness, it can and should be treated at the same time — as backwardness. In the absence of special help for the backward and the problem pupils, higher secondary education for the majority of pupils in our Multipurpose Schools is proving a failure, mainly because they are quite unable to cope with its exacting demands.

The above list of the new "institutions" which will have to be developed in Multipurpose Schools, if they are to be in a position to conduct their educational activities according to the latest methods, is suggestive rather than exhaustive. We wish to emphasise that the development of these and other equally necessary institutions in schools is the first step towards the practise of modern methods in educational work. After having developed the necessary institutions, the following principles should be remembered in organising activities for them. (1) No activity should be introduced in any institution, including the class-room, without first securing the proper motivation of those participating in it, as the Secondary Education Commission puts it, there should be an intimate relation between the life of the pupils and lessons in schools. (2) The activities should be organised in accordance with democratic principles. (3) The role of the teacher as a participant should be confined to the minimum. (4) Every pupil should participate in the activity in some form or the other, and each and every pupil should have the opportunity to make some contribution. Pupils should co-operate in



solving one another's problem. Self-help and help from their peers should be the student's motto while participating in any activity. (5) While not denying the value of reading and hearing as educational experiences, greater emphasis should be placed on more active and concrete ways of receiving experience. Deliberate efforts should be made to rescue education from the excessive domination of verbalism. In short, educational activities in schools should be carried on through what are called the "Activity Methods" in education. The suggestion of the Secondary Education Commission on this point is very relevant. "The basis of teaching must, therefore, be the organisation of the subject matter into units of projects which would create opportunities for self activity on the part of the students". (6) Every experience received in school must have a practical aspect — "Ample opportunities should be afforded for pupils to apply practically the knowledge that has been acquired by them" (Secondary Education Commission), in fact, it is very desirable that theoretical knowledge is built up while pupils are engaged in practical work. (7) Special care should be taken so as to derive the maximum "transfer value" from any educative experience. The Secondary Education Commission remarks, "It is not the amount of knowledge imparted or learnt in class matter, but the efficiency and thoroughness with which it is acquired by the students that counts. The teacher must concentrate on two things — quickening of interest and training in efficient techniques of learning and study". Hence, in the case of secondary school pupils, special emphasis should be given to the acquisition of the basic skills of study and self-expression — "it is essential that every student should be trained in the art of study" (Secondary Education Commission). To secure maximum transfer value for the educative experiences received in school, it is also necessary to follow such methods in offering those experiences which will develop among pupils the capacity for clear thinking. Widening of the range of students' interests would also contribute to secure greater transfer value of learning. It has already been discussed that the development of proper personality traits, work habits etc., are also necessary to realise the above objective.



The teacher will need special tools in order to practice education successfully in accordance with the above principles. The following are some tools which he may require. (a) A Hand-book of Suggestions in which prescribed subject syllabuses may be worked out in terms of projects, with hints about the methods of organising such projects. (b) Pupils' Work-books for every subject — the pupils will learn by working out the stimulating exercises in such books. (c) Reference books and other books for collateral reading in every subject. (d) Books suggesting to teachers activities, together with the methods for organising them, which may be undertaken in hobby clubs or as co-curricular activities. (e) Remedial text-books in every subject for use by backward pupils. (f) Projected and non-projected visual materials for use in connection with different subjects and school activities. (g) Different types of Mental tests for the more scientific evaluation of pupils for guidance purposes. (h) Literature containing information on courses and careers.

In every State there should be an expert body responsible for the organisation of the production of these tools. In the absence of any other expert body, existing State Bureau of Educational and Vocational Guidance may be entrusted with this responsibility, they may work in collaboration with other expert bodies, such as the Teachers' Training Collegès, for the production of the tools. Even private individuals and organisations may be encouraged to produce them under the guidance of the expert-body. The point which is being forcibly made here is that the production of the necessary tools for successful education in Multipurpose Schools cannot be left completely to private initiative. The Government should accept the main responsibility for their production, and should take systematic steps to discharge the responsibility.

Further, the school as a whole should be organised as a co-operative educative community according to democratic principles. Every experience received in the course of living in this community should result in positive rather than in negative education. Every relationship established or interaction taking place in the community should be satisfying to both the parties involved. Every individual in the community should not only accept the responsibility for educating himself but also for edu-

cating others. It should be specially remembered that pupils can help one another in learning while learning themselves, in fact, learning and helping others to learn are not complementary processes. As such group methods in education should be specially utilised in our schools in any learning situation, pupils may be divided into problem solving groups.

The necessary democratic institutions should also be developed for developing the right type of relationships within the community. The Staff-Council, a Pupils' Council for every class, a Teacher-pupil Committee, and Parent — Teacher Associations are illustrations of the types of institutions which we should attempt to develop with this end in view.

The Curriculum of a school, and its methods of education and examination, both internal and external, are functionally related; the three together should be considered as a whole and as forming what may be called the educative process in a school. It should be particularly remembered that they regulate and control one another, and that any change in one is bound to result in necessary changes in the others. Hence any discussion on the curriculum and methods of education in Multipurpose Schools must necessarily include discussions on methods of examination. As things stand in our country, external examinations dominate our Curricula and methods of education. The curriculum is worked out in terms of questions which may be asked in the external examination; methods of education are selected on the basis of their effectiveness in making pupils learn and remember the answers to those questions. No attempt at a reform of the curriculum or methods of education is therefore possible in our country without the reform of existing examinations.

While discussing possible reforms in the existing system of examination, it should be noted at the very beginning that the term "examination" is not the right one to be used to designate what we should attempt to do i.e. ascertaining the results which the educative experience undergone by a pupil has produced in him. In conducting examinations, selection of pupils for any thing is not our job, nor do we intend to find out the drawbacks of pupils and then to brand them. Our purpose in giving "examinations" is, or should be, as much educative as in case of any



other school activity. Hence it is suggested that the broader term "Evaluation" may be substituted for that of "Examination". Like education, evaluation is a dynamic and continuous process and is organically related to the main steps in education. Education cannot be carried on, unless the effect of every educative experience undergone by the pupil is ascertained — we require this information in order to be able to plan the subsequent educative experiences which can and may be offered to the pupil. At the end of a "stage in education". Primary, Secondary etc., we may so express the results of our evaluation so as to indicate the total educational development attained by the pupil up-to-date. This may be utilised by society for its own purposes. But it can never be adequately emphasised that irrespective of the purpose for which the results of any particular form of evaluation may be used, it is always an educational activity and should be related to the educative experience received by the pupils.

If this be the case, the evaluation of our pupils educational attainments, whether at the end of an educational year or of an educational 'stage', should be considered as a gradual and continuous process. To make a single evaluation at the end of an educational year or of an educational stage is unscientific. Take for example, the problem of evaluation at the end of the Higher Secondary School Stage. It is fallacious to think that the evaluation can and must be done at one and the same time. It may be spread over all the three Higher Secondary School years. If the pupils cease to receive systematic educative experiences in any Core subject in Class IX, such as the 3rd Language & Craft in West Bengal, as in the case with *General Science*, Social Studies & Elementary Mathematics in Class X, the evaluation of pupils in that subject may be completed in that class. Again, the evaluation of pupils in any subject should be related to the process of education hence a single evaluation in it should not be considered adequate. Further, a cumulative presentation of the results of a number of evaluations of a pupil in a particular subject or subjects yields a more complete picture about his educational attainments in that subject, than one single evaluation. Hence, it is necessary that Cumulative Records of evaluation of each pupil should be maintained through out the Higher Secondary School classes, and that they should play an important part in the final



evaluation of the pupil at the end of the Higher Secondary School Stage. In this connection it may be noted that the Secondary Education Commission strongly advocated the maintenance of Cumulative Record Cards. It may also be desirable to discontinue the practice of an "annual examination" in our Schools as in the case of such examinations, evaluation does not remain related to the process of education. Evaluation made during the process of education, and recorded in the Cumulative Record Cards should be considered an adequate basis for declaring class promotions. In short, we have suggested the acceptance of two underlying principles for the reform of the existing system of examination — (a) Evaluate while you educate (b) Maintain the records of such evaluation in a Cumulative Record Card.

Till now we have tried to evaluate only the scholastic attainments of pupils. But if, as we have suggested earlier in this chapter, we venture to develop the interests, personality traits and work habits of pupils as well through appropriate educative experience, these should also be brought within the scope of evaluation. We should remember the principle that evaluation cannot be separated from education — whatever is the subject matter for education, should also be the subject matter for evaluation. Hence, it is necessary to frame and utilise new tools and new techniques for evaluating the development of interests, personality-traits, and work habits of pupils. Under the present circumstances, Objective Rating Scales, with adequate safe-guards against the usual pitfalls in rating, may be considered as the best means of attaining this objective.

The introduction of activity methods, group-methods etc., for the purpose of education will also pose new problems for evaluation. We are not used to evaluating an activity, particularly when such an activity is carried on in groups. Teachers cannot be expected to do so, unless they are given insight into the problems of scientific evaluation — they should know how to frame specific objectives for evaluation in any field, and how to evaluate the extent to which those objectives have been realised through scientific methods. Existing methods of examination with which they are acquainted cannot be utilised for such evaluation.



It should be remembered that evaluation is of two kinds, the evaluation of the extent to which pupils have been educated and also the evaluation of the effectiveness of methods used for the purpose of education. If dynamic and improved methods of education are to be evolved, it is essential for us to evaluate the effectiveness of every educational method in common use. Without such evaluation, the effectiveness of educational methods in our schools can never be improved. Hence this is a new kind of evaluation which teachers in our schools shall have to undertake.

Modern evaluation in educational institutions is more and more taking the form of diagnosis. When we try to evaluate the effectiveness of an educational method in use, we try to estimate at the same time, the special merits and defects of the method — so that as a result of our evaluation we will know what improvements are needed in the method. Similarly, when we evaluate a pupil in respect of any aspect of his educational development, our objective is also to find out the areas in which he lags behind, so as to get an idea of how to effect improvement. Hence, in order to relate assessment to improvement in education, we should make our “tests” diagnostic as well.

It is common knowledge that the validity and the reliability of our present system of assessment of our pupils are very poor. This is due to several causes. While constructing a “test” we are not clear in our minds what precisely we intend to evaluate; as a result we very often evaluate something other than what we intend to evaluate e.g. in a History Essay type test we are frequently evaluating the capacity for written expression, while our intention probably is to evaluate knowledge of certain facts in history. Rarely do we try to evaluate all the educational objectives which we expect to achieve by offering certain educative experiences to our pupils. It is necessary to formulate specifically the objectives for evaluation and then to prepare appropriate scales for evaluating every one of them. It *thus* hardly needs emphasising that the objectives for evaluation will be really the same as those which guide us when offering educative experiences.

In order to improve the reliability of our evaluations, it is necessary to use a shorter scale than the one which we are accustomed to use at present. In the evaluation of the educa-



tional attainments of pupils through Essay type tests we usually have recourse to the "Rating method" and use a 100 point scale for the purpose. It is surely obvious that rating can never be reliable if such long scale is used for the purpose. Experiments have revealed that a five or seven point scale may be considered as the optimum for rating purposes. The Secondary Education Commission suggested the acceptance of a five point scale for rating the answers of pupils in essay type tests. Every answer may be rated on a five or seven point scale, and the whole answer script may also be rated in the same scale. In fact for rating the answers to every question, an objective rating scale with five or seven points should be prepared by defining every point in the scale.

Other types of questions e.g. Short-answer type, and the Objective type should also be used in order to reduce the element of subjectivity in evaluation and to improve its reliability. In short, a completely new approach is essential with regard to the problem of evaluation in Higher Secondary Schools.

It is unfortunate that though the pattern of our secondary education has been changed, and though new syllabi have been introduced in Multipurpose Schools, no changes or improvements in the methods of education or of evaluation in use have yet been effected. It is mainly because of this that the reforms effected in the field of secondary education are appearing as new wine in old bottles. The most urgent and the utmost emphasis will have to be given to a radical reform in the methods of education and evaluation practiced in our secondary schools at present if the new pattern of higher secondary education *is to be* a real success.

In this connection, it would probably be desirable to give top-most priority to the reform of the Higher Secondary School Final Examination. By long and well established tradition success in this examination is regarded as the ultimate goal for secondary education, and it is this examination which largely determines the methods of education and evaluation practiced in Secondary schools. Whatever may be the obstacles on the way to securing reforms in this field, we cannot afford to be half hearted in this matter; if we hope that the Multipurpose School experiment will prove successful, we must make up our minds to take drastic steps if necessary to secure reforms in the allied fields of methodo-



logy and evaluation wherever necessary. The following concrete suggestions are offered with the end in view.

(1) A new institution will have to be developed to assist the Board of Secondary Education or the University for conducting the Higher Secondary School Final Examination according to the latest scientific principles and findings in the field of evaluation. It should be noted that conducting the Higher Secondary School Final Examination is not merely a problem of organisation, it is also one of scientific methods and techniques. Hence, an expert body must be developed to take care of this second aspect of the examination. The Ministry of Education, Government of India, has taken the initiative in this matter and plan to develop a State Evaluation Unit in every State during the Third Five Year Plan. The idea is not a novel one. Advanced countries already have similar organisations. We do not know as yet what precisely will be functions of the State Evaluation Units. In our opinion, it should be responsible for ensuring that the question papers, (each of which is a scale for evaluation), in the Examination should be set, and the answer scripts scored according to the latest scientific principles, it could in addition draw up standardised tests to be utilised for the evaluation of the "non-examination subjects". The Evaluation Unit may also be entrusted with the task of ensuring that the Cumulative Record Card is being properly maintained in schools and watch out how and to what extent the data collected on this card should influence the total evaluation. It should be responsible for carrying on research to improve both external and internal assessments in our Secondary Schools, and with the purpose in view the State Evaluation Unit may have to undertake such activities as conducting discussion groups and seminars, visiting schools, sending out directives to examiners and paper-setters, etc.

(2) The following reforms should be immediately effected in conducting the Higher Secondary School Final Examination, and the State Evaluation Unit should be responsible for implementing them.

(a) The Objectives to be achieved in teaching different subjects should be framed in concrete terms. Questions in the



examination should be framed as to test whether these objectives have been realised or not.

- (b) No person should be appointed as a paper setter or an examiner unless he or she has some real understanding of the problems of scientific evaluation.
- (c) The scoring of answers to questions, Essay type or Short-answer-type, or of the whole answer script should not be attempted on a longer scale than a seven-point one.
- (d) The points in the scale for every question should be defined as precisely as possible.
- (e) Different types of question (Essay type, Short answer-type and Objective-type) should be set to suit the different types of objectives which it is being attempted to realise.
- (f) A portion of the total marks in every subject should be set apart for the day to day work of the pupil in the school.
- (g) The whole of the Higher Secondary School Final Examination need not be taken at one and the same time. It may be spread over the three years of the Higher Secondary School stage and assessments in certain subjects may be entrusted more completely to the schools. In short, the experiment of internal assessment which is being tried in West Bengal, with regard to the Core Subjects is worth emulation. It may be necessary sooner or later to frame some standardised achievement tests for these subjects to secure better uniformity between the assessments made by different schools or to devise some method of scaling teachers estimates but this can easily be done.
- (h) If the examination questions are set in terms of the objectives framed for teaching the subjects, if they do not assess mere rote-learning and do not encourage guessing — if they are a real evaluation of the educational changes effected in the pupils, there should be no harm in introducing supplementary examinations more frequently. The rules for eligibility to appear for such examinations may also be made less rigid. Examinations should not any longer remain the bug-bear of pupils, the emphasis in best should be shifted from examinations to education. If the pupil has been properly educated, he need have no excessive fear of passing examinations.



(3) The question of effecting necessary reforms in internal examinations should also be taken up in right earnest. Such a *reform* is directly related to the problem of introducing new methods of education in our schools. The following reforms may with profit be effected in internal examinations:

- (a) The evaluation should take the form of diagnosis as well as of testing results it should be able to locate the areas of education in which the pupil is facing special difficulty, so that remedial educational experiences may be given to him with a view to overcoming his difficulties.
- (b) Evaluation should also be made of the effectiveness of the methods of education which are being utilised by the teacher, with a view to their modification and improvement wherever necessary.
- (c) Evaluation should be linked closely with education. Efforts should be made to evaluate the pupil in every field in which his education is being attempted—the acquisition of knowledge, skills, interests, attitudes, personality traits etc., in short the evaluation of the pupil should be much more comprehensive than it is at present.
- (d) The total evaluation of the pupils should also be spread over the pupil's entire schooling. The practice of only holding annual examinations and one or two term examination and basing our assessment entirely on them should be discontinued. The final evaluation of the education received by a pupil at the end of a school year, should be the cumulative record of the results of the evaluation made of his education in the process of receiving a variety of educative experiences.
- (e) The reforms suggested in the case of external examination with regard to the setting of examination papers and scoring of answer scripts are also applicable to internal examinations.
- (f) Other methods of evaluation than asking questions (e.g. Observation and rating on Objective rating scales; rating practical work on Objective rating scales etc.) should be used for evaluation whenever and wherever necessary.

- (g) The results of evaluation in the case of every pupil should be recorded in a Cumulative Record Card which should play an important role in the total evaluation.

Our best efforts to introduce new methods of education and evaluation are not proving successful because our teachers do not have adequate training in them. The reason for this is that our Teachers' Training Institutions have, by and large, become the repository of over theoretical outmoded methods. Further, in the absence of any methodical follow up, our teachers forget what they have learnt at Training College when they return to schools so that whether the teacher is trained or untrained, tradition is the only guide both in teaching and evaluation. New methods of education and evaluation are indeed so different from traditional methods in these fields that they at times appear almost shocking to teachers. Moreover, such methods demand greater thought and more creative imagination for success than is available to an average teacher who has grown accustomed to mechanically practicing the traditional methods.

Men and women of great talent will have to be attracted to the field of education and they should be given a thorough training in the methods and techniques of scientific education and evaluation. Further, the curriculum and methods of teaching in our Teachers Training Colleges require radical changes so that the newly trained teachers may not go to schools as ill-equipped as their predecessors. Strenuous and unremitting efforts should also be made for the in-service training of teachers. In fact under present circumstances in India the in-service training of teachers should be considered not only a vitally important but as an integral part of the total preparation of a teacher. The Directorate of Secondary Education through its Extension Services Programme at special Centres attached to 55 Teachers' Training Colleges is making some efforts at the in-service training of teachers. But the efforts are relatively meagre and inadequate planning and follow-up are producing few concrete results. The following suggestions are therefore offered for training teachers in-service to practice the new methods of education and evaluation successfully.



- (a) Every school should have a specialist with the "technical know-how" in the above fields. He should be a teacher himself. He should receive training of a practical nature at least for one year after his post graduate degree in education and after some teaching experience. He should enjoy such prestige among his colleagues in schools, that he may function as a technical adviser when they face any problem in regard to new methods of education and evaluation. He should also be generally responsible, under the control of the Head of the School, for ensuring the introduction of new methods in the school. If the teachers are "task-oriented" their training, with help from such a Specialist colleague, will be much more real and effective. It should not be difficult to train one such specialist for every Multipurpose School. It should not also be difficult to recruit teachers of adequate intellectual calibre, academic attainments, professional training and experience and personality traits to function in the above capacity after adequate training provided suitable remuneration and status is attached to the post.
- (b) Educational administrators (Headmasters and Inspectors) should also receive adequate orientation with regard to the new methods of education and evaluation so that they may be able to utilise the services of the above specialist in schools. Not only should they develop a favourable attitude to these new approaches as a result of orientation received; they should be able to give informed guidance and support to the specialist in their schools.
- (c) As the training of the specialist with "technical know-how" in schools shall have to be thorough, practical and effective we should think in terms of a Special Training Institution for the purpose. Teachers Training Institutions, as they are now, do not appear to be in a position at the moment to bear the burden. Their tradition is scholastic rather than practical; they do not keep enough direct touch with actual work in schools; the staff of the average Teachers Training Colleges do not have full command over the latest methods and techniques of education and evaluation and they are not responsible for the actual improvement of

school practices. In point of fact, a new institution, the State Bureau of Educational and Vocational Guidance is in the process of development. This institution may be found suitable to be entrusted with the task. There is only one State Bureau for the whole of the State, as such it is possible to man it with the best of staff available. Again, guidance in the widest sense of the term is not different from education; it can never be successfully practiced in Indian schools without general improvement of the methods and techniques of education and evaluation. The State Bureaux have already accepted the responsibility for Training Guidance personnel (Teacher Counsellors).

In Higher Secondary Schools, if the role of these Teacher Counsellors is conceived of in wider perspective, they may be able to serve as the specialist "technical know-how" in the School, with a little broad-based training for this role. Moreover, the State Bureau is engaged in the production of tools and aids for education and evaluation; it has direct touch with school practices; it is responsible for the effective functioning of the School Guidance Service; it may fittingly be also made responsible for improvement of methods of education and evaluation in general in schools. As things stand, it may be found convenient to utilise the State Bureaux and the Teacher Counsellors for improving methods of education and evaluation in Schools.

Proper methods of teaching and evaluation will provide the key to the relative success or failure of our Multipurpose Schools. The suggestions given already for improvements on both their vitally important and inter-related fields will, if implemented, we consider, do much towards improving the qualities of the education given in Multipurpose Schools, indeed in schools of any type, and prove perhaps a determining factor in the ultimate success or failure.



## CHAPTER X

# GUIDANCE SERVICE IN MULTIPURPOSE SCHOOLS

### *Importance of Setting up Guidance Services in Schools*

THE SECONDARY Education Commission felt that the provision of diversified courses of instruction imposes upon teachers and School administrators, the additional responsibility of giving proper guidance to pupils in their choice of Courses and Careers. Provision of a diversified pattern of Secondary Education cannot by itself result in establishing an educational system in which education would be *according* to the interests and abilities of pupils. The idea cannot achieve operational success until and unless systematic efforts are made to develop the latent abilities of pupils, they are scientifically appraised of their abilities, interests etc., and given proper help in an enlightened choice of Courses and Careers.

Further, the establishment of Multipurpose Schools aimed at realising certain social objectives — (a) Reducing the lopsidedness of our employment market, resulting in reducing the number of un-employed and ensuring the supply of properly qualified persons for all categories of jobs particularly required for the success of our Five Year Plan. (b) Reducing specially the number of the educated un-employed, by reducing the number of students taking general Courses and increasing the number of those taking specialised courses. (c) Reducing the admission of ill-equipped students to Universities, indirectly helping to improve the standard of University education.

The educational objectives and social objectives of Multipurpose Schools go hand in hand; the realisation of one is dependent on that of the other. None of the objectives can be realised, unless there is an effective guidance service in every

Multipurpose School. The Secondary Education Commission points out that the "subject of guidance has gained great importance in many countries in recent years particularly in America". But in our country School Guidance Services have to be started from scratch.

#### *School Guidance Services at present*

In pursuance of the suggestions made by the Secondary Education Commission, the Government of India took the initiative in establishing School Guidance Services. With Central assistance, seven States have so far set up State Bureaux of Educational and Vocational Guidance. There has been no systematic beginning of guidance work in other States. A State Bureau is entrusted with the task of organising School Guidance Services in its State. It is unfortunate that the majority of States have not as yet established State Bureaux of Educational and Vocational Guidance, the first step towards organising School Guidance Services. There is great difference in staff, equipment etc., among the State Bureaux which have been set up. For example, Orissa has the most meagre staff for its State Bureau, while U.P. has the most elaborate staff among all the State Bureaux. No doubt, the number of Secondary Schools in a State should, to some extent, determine the staff of its State Bureau; but its functions should also be taken into consideration, while determining the number and nature of its staff.

Besides the staff, the organisational set up, status etc., of the State Bureaux also vary from State to State; in certain States, State Bureaux are still departments of Teachers Training Colleges (e.g. Orissa, C.P., West Bengal), while in others, they are institutions directly responsible to the Directorate of Education.

The Government of India, occasionally calls conferences of the Heads of State Bureaux to thrash out a common programme of Guidance work in different States. The All India Educational and Vocational Guidance Association has also been set up in 1954 as a result of happy co-operation of official and non-official efforts. Since its formation, it has been holding annual Conferences of people interested in guidance and is trying to thrash out a common approach to guidance problems. The Central Bureau of Educational and Vocational Guidance established in 1954 is also trying to co-ordinate guidance work in the country by serving as a



clearing house of guidance information, by taking the initiative in the formation of the All India Association of Educational and Vocational Guidance, and also by taking the initiative in calling occasional conferences of the Heads of State Bureaux

But inspite of all these efforts, school guidance work in the seven States do not conform to any uniform pattern; its progress in them has also been different. The reasons for these differences seem to be the following — (a) State Bureaux are limited in their activities by the number and quality of their staff. For example, because of the lack of adequate staff, most of the State Bureaux have not been able to take up the systematic production of Mental Tests, one of the important tools in guidance work. (b) Inspite of Joint Conferencès, etc., there still exists differences of out-look in guidance work between the State Bureaux. For example, there are State Bureaux whose guidance work is virtually confined to dissemination of information on Courses and Careers; there are other Bureaux to whom guidance work mainly means administration of mental tests and offering suggestions for choice of Courses or Careers on the basis of scores obtained in such tests. (c) There is little co-ordination between the State Bureaux and State Education Departments. State Education Departments do not always consult the State Bureaux when they frame their guidance policies for States. Worse still, they are not always in a mood to give consideration to suggestions offered by State Bureaux, even though they were made uninvited. The situation is worse in States where State Bureaux are parts of Teachers' Training Colleges; such State Bureaux cannot have direct access to the State Education Departments.

Finally the State Education Departments are not always convinced of the utility of guidance work, their efforts in the field are naturally half-hearted and lukewarm. As a result, guidance even in the Seven States, where State Bureaux of Educational and Vocational Guidance have been set up is not making the desired progress. The most important work of the State Bureaux so far seems to be the attempt at training of Teacher-Counsellors or Career-masters for running guidance service in schools. But the work is not being carried on satisfactorily in most State Bureaux; the quality of training leaves much scope for improvement, the number of Teacher-Counsellors or Career-masters so



far trained is insufficient to meet the demand of the Multipurpose Schools. The State Bureaux do not follow the same syllabus in training Teacher-Counsellors or Career-masters; the duration of their training also varies (from three weeks to nine months). Besides training Teacher-Counsellors, two of the State Bureaux have begun to train the Regional Counsellors as well.

But even though, the seven States with State Bureaux have trained Teacher-Counsellors (whatever may be the quality of their training) for some of their schools, guidance work is being carried on effectively in very few of them. This is because of the fact that very few States have accepted any systematic scheme of educational and vocational guidance for schools. For example, there is no direction from the State Education Department that systematic guidance work should be considered as part of the regular educational activities of the Multipurpose School's. There is no direction that Teacher-Counsellors should be sufficiently freed from their traditional School activities to devote time to guidance activities and that provision should be made in the school time-table for such guidance activities as Career talks, Hobby-clubs etc. The minimum finance, necessary for carrying guidance activities is not also sanctioned (e.g. funds for building up a "Career information library"; Stationery, postage etc., for communicating with parents, training institutions etc.). In short the School-guidance service has not been accorded any official status in most of the states which have set up State Bureaux of Educational and Vocational Guidance.

Under the circumstances, Teacher-Counsellors in School find no opportunity for work and "gradually relapse into illiteracy". They also receive little co-operation from their Heads and other colleagues. Most of the heads of schools felt that guidance is a meaningless extra work which hampers the normal educational activities of schools; the teachers feel that it is a meaningless extra burden on them. As such both the heads of schools and teachers in them resist the introduction of guidance activities. The Teacher-Counsellor, who, in most cases, is a comparatively junior member of the staff finds himself helpless against all these odds.

Very few of the States have taken up systematic production of guidance tools; Teacher-Counsellors in most States are not in a



position to carry out Guidance activities successfully because of the lack of tools at their disposal. The tools available are either inadequate or they do not meet the guidance needs of specific schools. For example, the Career leaflets produced by the Government of India do not suit the needs of a School for occupational information, most of whose pupils come from higher socio-economic circles. Again, a mental test prepared in the State language by a State Bureau with its norms etc., determined in reference to the pupils in the State may not be suitable for use in another State. The result is this that the Teacher-Counsellor often remain inactive, because of the lack of proper tools, which may make his practice successful.

The Head-teachers and Assistant-teachers in Schools are not oriented to guidance work. Hence on return to school after training the Teacher-Counsellor finds himself in hostile. Without the direct support of the Head he cannot initiate any work. As most of the heads consider guidance work meaningless and interfering with the normal activities of schools, guidance work has made head-way in very few of the schools inspite of there being Teacher-Counsellors on the staff.

To summarise, the existing position of School guidance work in our country, it may be said that though it has been sponsored by the Central Government, its impact has not yet been such as to have any appreciable effect on our school work as yet. There is still the necessity to think out its entire rationale, to be clear about the institutions which may be built and activities which may be carried on through them. Necessary tools for guidance work are still to be developed and guidance work is still to become part of regular guidance activities.

### *The Rationale for School Guidance*

There is still confusion even among persons having the highest responsibility in the field as to what we are actually aiming at in School Guidance. Most people think that our job is to offer Vocational Guidance to pupils. It is not unusual to find in correspondence from the Ministry of Education, Government of India, the term Vocational Guidance being used instead of School Guidance. From a perusal of the report of the discussions of the Central Advisory Board of Education on the subject it appears



that similar confusion is not altogether absent among members of that august body. Many of the State Bureaux feel that their responsibility is limited to organising a vocational guidance service for the Secondary School pupils of their States. The State Bureaux further feel that their responsibility is limited to organising Vocational Guidance Service for Multipurpose School pupils of their States.

It must be pointed out that the term Vocational Guidance has a more limited connotation than the term School-Guidance. As our Multipurpose Schools are not as yet offering terminal education, vocational guidance has little meaning to the pupils of those schools. It is educational guidance they are really seeking for on promotion to class IX or at the successful completion of the School course, Multipurpose School pupils are primarily interested in educational courses which may be best suited to them. No doubt, they judge the courses in reference to their future jobs. Still they are directly interested in our courses and not jobs. The task of the School-Counsellor is to help the pupil to choose the educational course best suited to him; while doing this he may have to relate the course chosen to prospective jobs. This is not vocational guidance but educational guidance.

The number of pupils who discontinue general education on completion of the Junior School Stage (Class VIII) is not many. Most of them are not expected to enter the Vocational field immediately. They would prefer to enter "trade-courses" in Vocational Training Institutions. As such, helping them may more appropriately be designated educational guidance than Vocational guidance.

Though most junior school pupils desire Higher Secondary Education, very few of them (as things stand at the moment), are suited to such education. The result is the lowering of standards and wastage in the Higher Secondary School-Final Examination. This unsuitability of pupils for higher secondary education, is not due to any lack of innate abilities; in most cases, it is due to Scholastic backwardness which has accumulated for years. The only guidance which can be offered to the majority of the pupils under the present state of affairs is to discontinue higher secondary education. This is neither desirable for these



pupils nor for society. Moreover, even if such guidance is given, it has no chance of being accepted. The Counsellor often feels helpless in his work, because of the Scholastic retardation of pupils. Take for example, a pupil who has potentialities of success in "Pure" Science Course but who has become greatly retarded in Mathematics. He is unsuitable to any Multipurpose School course because of this retardation. Under the circumstances the school guidance service cannot merely confine itself to curricular guidance of pupils. It has to work for the general improvement of educational methods in use, (the main cause of scholastic retardation in our Schools), and should try to organise special help for greatly retarded pupils.

Scholastic retardation of pupils is not the only factor which stands in the way of effective educational guidance. Widespread undesirable behaviour patterns exist among our Secondary School pupils. Over emphasis on academic values, poor methods of education in schools, ever increasing scholastic retardation of pupils, the transitional stage of our society and the breakdown of the traditional institutions for personality development have created intense personality problems for our Secondary School pupils. At the same time, personality-traits occupy a special place in determining curricular or vocational suitability. Take for example, a girl otherwise suited to the medical course who has a phobia for dead bodies, or a boy otherwise suited to a Science course who suffers from excessive day-dreaming. Guidance in these two cases would necessarily mean help in improving personality adjustment. Under such circumstances, educational and vocational guidance cannot be successful without personality guidance.

Hence to develop clear perspective of the issues involved, it is necessary to substitute the term School-guidance for vocational guidance or even for Educational and Vocational guidance. The term School guidance would mean giving help to pupils (individually) whenever such help is needed in his school life. Usually, such help is needed by pupils on the following occasions:

- (a) When they fall behind the grade in their scholastic attainments.

- (b) When they develop undesirable behaviour or face any problem of adjustment.
- (c) When they have the opportunity to choose one or other courses or when they have to decide, whether to continue higher secondary education or to go in for some Vocational course or training.
- (d) When they have to plan for their future on completion of higher secondary schooling.

It should be pointed out that School guidance should essentially be considered as an educational or developmental work. For example, helping a pupil in the choice of proper course of study should not consist in merely telling him which course is most suitable to him. Attempts should be made from the very beginning of his secondary school years to develop the necessary interests, attainments and personality traits in him which would ensure him success in the course in line with his innate abilities. It should be remembered that every pupil is suitable for something or the other. The object of School guidance should be to find this out and to educate the pupils accordingly. Viewed in this perspective, there is little difference between School guidance and scientific educational efforts; indeed, there should not be much difference.

### *Guidance Activities*

Viewed broadly, all educational activities in the School should be considered as guidance activities. We may draw the attention of the readers specially to those activities which our schools do not as yet consider parts of their normal activities, though they are vital to the guidance of the pupils:

- (1) Systematic collection of comprehensive scientific information about pupils and their maintenance in Cumulative form.
- (2) Systematic development of interests in pupils according to scientific methods.
- (3) Systematic development of desirable personality traits in pupils according to Scientific methods.
- (4) Systematic development, (according to Scientific methods), of proper vocational motives in pupils.



- (5) Taking necessary remedial measures for helping pupils, suffering from backwardness and problem-behaviour.
- (6) Counselling pupils individually whenever they face special problems.

### *Institutions*

As we have pointed out, there should be no real difference between educational and guidance activities in schools. Every guidance activity should be educational and vice versa. The list of guidance activities, tabulated above, should convince the readers on this point. Every one of these activities has relevance to the improvement of educational attainments of pupils, even in the narrow sense of the term. Hence, guidance activities should be integrated with the normal activities of the school so much so that they should find place in the normal school time-table. But the existing "institutions" in our schools are not adequate for successfully undertaking the guidance activities. In an average Secondary School in India, the class, the curriculum and the time-table are the only effectively functioning institutions. Only recently, the library is developing as another institution. To carry on guidance work effectively, it is necessary to develop the following new institutions in our schools:

- (1) Hobby club: The purpose for this institution should be to develop diversified curricular interests among pupils.
- (2) Co-curricular club: This institution should specifically aim at the development of personality traits.
- (3) Remedial-club: The purpose for this is to help the "backward" and "problem" pupils.
- (4) Career-class: The purpose for this institution should develop vocational motives among pupils and to relate them to the courses which may be opted.
- (5) School-Guidance Corner: This has the same purpose as the above.
- (6) Cumulative Record Card: The purpose for this, should be collection of scientific comprehensive information about pupils and maintaining them in a Cumulative manner.
- (7) Parent-teacher Association: The purpose for this is to secure the co-operation of parents in guidance work.

- (8) Teacher-Counsellors' Room: This should aim at individual Counselling.
- (9) School-guidance Committee: This should aim at co-ordinating guidance activities in the school.

The first step towards the introduction of a guidance service in any school should be the development of the above institutions. They should be considered as parts of the regular life of the school and should function within the normal school hours. The State Directorate of Education and the State Board of Secondary Education can make valuable contributions to the development of these institutions, by directing the schools to develop them. However undesirable it may be, we have developed a habit of working only on directives; besides our authorities, do issue directives to schools in regard to what they consider to be minimum necessities for the effective functioning of a school. There is no reason why the development of the above institutions should not be included within the list of the minimum required for the effective functioning of a Multipurpose school. It is unfortunate that our authorities have not as yet developed the above outlook in regard to the role of the guidance service in Multipurpose schools. It is rather strange that as yet there is no categorical direction from the authorities that no Multipurpose school should be started without making arrangements for systematic guidance work. Along with such directives there should be simultaneous efforts to popularise these institutions among Multipurpose schools. The heads and the teachers should be persuaded about their utility. This can be done if only these institutions function satisfactorily when introduced in schools. Heads and teachers should be given the necessary knowledge and the skill to make the working of these institutions a success. They should be supplied with necessary tools and aids for the purpose.

### *Production of tools*

For successful working of a School guidance service we require tools of various types. Mental tests are one of them. We need both ability and attainment tests; interest and personality tests would also be useful. Guidance workers should have tools for ascertaining as precisely as possible the abilities and attainments of the



pupils; the interests and personality of the pupils have also to be found out and assessed. These should be compared and contrasted to the abilities, attainments, interests and personality traits of pupils with whom they would have to compete for selection. This is more important in a country like India where there is intense competition both for entry into jobs and courses. Hence, while these tests should go through all the scientific processes for test construction (establishment of reliability, validity etc.), the norms of the tests should also be built up with special care. Such norms should be Statewise, as competition for most of the jobs and courses are on the same basis. Building up all India norms, particularly, for pupils of higher abilities and attainments is also a necessity as there are opportunities for jobs and courses on an all India level. The question of building up scientific criteria for guidance is also very important in our country. Because of the social situation existing at present our pupils appear to be over ambitious—they are always being pressed for a level of performance beyond their abilities and attainments. Hence to avoid wastage it is necessary to try to fix scientifically the points (in references to particular jobs and courses) beyond which a pupil may not be pressed.

It may be noted that there is a tendency in certain quarters in our country to give inordinate importance to mental tests in guidance work, so much so that guidance work is considered almost synonymous to test administration, its interpretation and communication of results. Though guidance scientists no longer subscribe to this view, none of them challenge the necessity of mental tests in guidance work. It may also be said that under the present social situation in India, mental tests may have to play a more important role in guidance work than it does in the more progressive countries.

Who should be responsible for preparing the above type of tools? Obviously, the responsibility cannot be with the Teacher-Counsellor. He has no time for training or resources to undertake the work. It is unfortunate that the problem of developing mental tests as tools for guidance has not as yet been properly tackled by the authorities. Some felt that Teachers' Training Colleges could make significant contributions to the development of necessary Mental Tests. The Government of India, Min-



istry of Education put forward a scheme of giving financial help to Training Colleges desirous of pursuing worthwhile educational research. Many of the Training Colleges proposed to develop mental tests and got financial assistance from the Government. But these efforts have not been crowned with appreciable success. Naturally, the Training College staff did not have the time or the tenacity required for developing mental tests. Sometimes they did not also have the necessary training and experience for developing such tests. Not being directly concerned with guidance work, Training Colleges could not spot out the special requirements of mental tests for guidance work, so the Training Colleges, development of mental tests is merely an academic research work. None should therefore be surprised if the Training Colleges could not make much contribution to the field. It should be clearly realised that at this stage of the development of mental tests in our country, the task cannot be relegated to the field of casual efforts; only after we have developed the minimum number of mental tests required for guidance work may we depend upon casual efforts for supplementing them. It should also be remembered that development of mental tests for guidance work is a continuous process. A test, its norms and the guidance criterion built on its basis have to be continuously revised if it has to function effectively. This can never be achieved through casual efforts. Hence there must be an organisation responsible for developing the necessary mental tests as tools for guidance. This organisation may make fullest use of any mental test which may be developed by any individual or institution.

For some-time, there have been discussions among persons intimately connected with the work that an All India Organisation should be established for the development of necessary mental tests for guidance work. Development of such an All India Organisation may be helpful, but it cannot cope with the problem as we have envisaged above for the following reasons — (a) The tests shall have to be constructed in the regional languages (b) The norms, guidance criteria etc. shall also have to be built on regional basis. (c) It is not possible for a Single Organisation to cope with the dimension of the problem. The State Bureaux of Guidance are probably the most suitable institutions to be entrusted with the task of development of mental tests for guidance purposes.



But the Ministry of Education, Government of India sanctioned such a limited staff for the State Bureaux that it was not possible for them to undertake the task of development of mental tests. Apart from the Bureaux for U.P. and West Bengal, no other Bureau, systematically tried to develop mental tests. Surveying the situation as a whole, it may be said that in most of the States guidance workers lack the mental tests for offering effective guidance to pupils. It is heartening to know that the Ministry of Education, Government of India has accepted the principle, of making the State Bureau responsible for the development of mental tests within their jurisdiction. It is agreeable to attach a well staffed Test-construction Unit at its cost to every State Bureau during the Third Five Year Plan. It is hoped that the State Education Departments will take full advantage of this offer, and State Bureaux will under take systematic production of mental tests as tools for guidance. Even when the State Bureau are equipped with test-construction units there will remain the necessity of having an All India Organisation to co-ordinate and stimulate test-construction work all over the country. It may be helpful in the following manner— (a) It may offer expert advice to the State Bureaux whenever sought. Test-construction is such a highly specialised job that such advice may be welcome to every State Bureau. (b) It may try to avoid publication of efforts in test construction by co-ordinating the test-construction work of the State Bureaux (this is most relevant in case of States having the same language e.g. Hindi). (c) It may try to develop tests with All India norms etc. (may be non-verbal tests).

Mental tests are not the only tools required by guidance workers. There should be necessary literature containing information about social opportunities available to our young people in the fields of Courses and Careers. This is more important in our country as training and job-opportunities are rapidly on the increase and as the values of types of training and jobs are in the melting pot. The field of information in regard to courses and careers in our country is as much virgin ground as that of development of mental tests. The Ministry of Labour, Government of India, has systematically undertaken to work in the field. Though the guidance tools produced by the Ministry of Labour in the field of information in regard to courses and careers are proving very



helpful, they are not able to completely satisfy the needs of guidance workers in schools for the following reasons— (a) They are mostly on occupations rather than on courses and trainings. But the clients of a school-guidance worker in a Multipurpose School are directly more interested on courses and training rather than in occupations. (b) Language and presentation of the "Occupational literature" are not usually suitable to school pupils. Besides the literature produced to date are either in English or Hindi. They need to be translated into the regional languages. (c) Local information seems to be of greater value to school guidance workers than All India information. The Ministry of Labour, naturally has concentrated its efforts to the collection and publication of All India information.

Hence State Bureaux of Guidance making systematic efforts in the field have found it an imperative necessity to try to produce tools in the field of information in regard to courses, despite the efforts of the Ministry of Labour. For example, the pupils in Schools in a poor country like India are more interested in Scholarship facilities than in Electrical Engineering as a career; they are more interested to know the details of courses etc. offered in the different colleges and vocational institutions within their district. For obvious reasons, the interest of the Ministry of Labour is in a different field and naturally such details do not appear relevant to their work. Again, the Ministry of Labour is interested in job analysis, while the immediate concern of the State Bureaux (both for development of Mental tests as well as for Educational counselling) is Course analysis. Hence every State Bureau should also have a small unit for supplementing the efforts of the Ministry of Labour in the field. It is desirable that this unit should work in close collaboration with the State Directorate of Employment Service who have specialised staff to work in the field. It is heartening to note that steps have already been taken to develop systematic collaboration between the State Bureaux and the State Directorates of Employment Service in fields of mutual interest. Special Committees have already been formed in many States with representatives of both the institutions, along with others, to secure co-operation in fields of mutual interests. It is expected that these committees will function properly and include production of guidance literature as one of the fields for collabo-



ration. At the central level as well, it is felt that the Ministry of Labour, may seek the co-operation of the Ministry of Education in making their "Career-leaflets," etc. more suited to be used by the School Guidance Workers.

Visual materials for Group Guidance work should be considered another type of tools for guidance workers. Guidance information have not only to be disseminated to pupils, but also to parents and teachers in general. The task cannot be handled without taking recourse to what are called the mass media of communication. Arranging exhibitions, screening films etc. should be very helpful in the work. Hence posters etc. for exhibition and filmstrips for picture shows should be produced as tools for exhibition. The Central Bureau of Educational and Vocational Guidance, Delhi, tried to produce a few of both. But unfortunately it has not continued the efforts in the direction. It is desirable that the efforts of producing visual materials should also be carried on Statewise. As most of our schools do not possess projector, greater emphasis may be placed on the preparation of non-projected visual materials. The State Bureau should also have a small visual-aid production unit. This should work in close collaboration with the State Publicity Department.

### *Training of Guidance-personnel*

It is not superfluous to state that however effective guidance tools they may be, they will not only be of little help unless they are utilised by properly trained persons but that in fact they might be a positive danger. As guidance is a new venture in our country, there is acute dearth of adequate properly trained persons to undertake the work. We have to face the problem of effectively training adequate numbers of all categories of guidance personnel. At this stage of the development of guidance movement in our country, it is necessary to take a broad view in interpreting the meaning of the term guidance personnel. Everybody who has a definite role to play in guidance work should be included within the definition and should receive some education to play his role in an enlightened manner. We may divide guidance-personnel into two broad categories-non-specialists and specialists. We may think of the following categories of non-specialist guidance personnel who need training.

(1) Educational administrators, particularly Headmasters and Inspectors of Schools: The Headmaster is at the head of the School-administration. Every thing in the school should be under his control; school guidance work is no exception to this. He should be the Chairman of the School Guidance Committee, which should be responsible for all guidance work in a school. But unfortunately, headmasters in most of our schools, have practically no idea about guidance work. They do not consider it meaningful and do not find it relevant to the day-to-day school work of pupils; many of them even consider guidance work hindrance to the educational work of the school. Those who have practical experience of work in the field would agree that one of the important reasons why guidance work is not able to make headway is the negative attitude of our heads of schools. This attitude can only be tackled by proper education. Besides, the headmaster cannot intelligently control the guidance work in his school, unless he has some grounding in the field. The Inspectors of schools are also key persons who can persuade the schools to undertake systematic guidance work. They should also help the schools in improving their guidance work by constructive suggestions while on visit. But unfortunately the attitude and knowledge of most of the Inspectors of schools in regard to guidance work is no better than those of the headmasters. There is no doubt that guidance work in schools would have much smoother sailing if it could have the inspector of schools as its pilot.

Hence, the problem of the education of Heads and Inspectors of schools in the field of guidance shall have to be systematically tackled. We are realising it at great cost that the task should have been taken up simultaneously with the training of specialist teachers for guidance work.

(2) Teachers: If guidance work is to be integrated into general school work, every teacher should be considered as a guidance worker. He should have a new orientation and more scientific out-look towards his day to day work in school. Besides in many guidance activities (specifically designated as such) such as running the hobby club, maintaining Cumulative Record Cards etc. he has a direct role to play. Training at the Teachers' Training Colleges at the moment does not equip him with the



necessary knowledge, skill and out-look to play his role in guidance work properly. Hence, the problem of training teachers in general for guidance work shall also have to be faced.

(3) Parents: Every parent, particularly in Indian Society (in a sense) is a guidance worker. Their influence on the children is the greatest. They can be very effective in developing the interests attitudes etc. of children in harmony with their potentialities and available social opportunities. But, unfortunately, quite unknowingly many of them are playing a negative role in regard to the guidance of their children. They have no real idea about the abilities and attainments of their pupils; besides they have many out of date notions about prestige and prospects of jobs. Unless they receive some education in the field of guidance, school guidance work is not expected to achieve much success. coming to the training of guidance specialists, we find that the following categories need to be trained.

- (1) Career-master: It has been decided that during the Third Five Year Plan, attempts should be made to train a Career-master for every Secondary school; a Career-master should also be trained for every Multipurpose School with less than three streams. He would be a part-time guidance worker (the rest of his time being devoted to teaching) and his main duties would be dissemination of guidance information and organisation and maintenance of Cumulative Record Cards.
- (2) Teacher-Counsellor: The Third Plan envisages, a Teacher Counsellor for every four or more streamed Multipurpose school; the three streamed Multipurpose schools should also be provided with a Teacher-Counsellor, as far as practicable. Schools having Teacher-Counsellors would have full-fledged Guidance-services.
- (3) Regional Counsellor: The Regional Counsellors are expected to supervise and co-operate with the Guidance work of schools within their jurisdiction. The State Bureau would maintain liaison with the schools, through the Regional Counsellors. But it should be noted that the Third Five Year Plan for guidance work has not made any provision for the appointment of Regional Counsellors.

though three States (Bihar, U.P. and Bombay) had already started Regional Bureaux. Naturally, the task of training all these six categories of Guidance personnel (non-specialists and specialists) is a formidable one. Besides the training shall have to be effective. Offering guidance is a delicate task and we cannot afford to commit blunders. Further if the training of the guidance personnel is not of such a standard that they can carry on guidance work with a high level of efficiency, it is likely that the whole guidance movement suffer a serious set-back.

It should be accepted as an inviolable principle that no institution not actually engaged in guidance work should be entrusted with the task of training guidance personnel. If the principle stated above is accepted, there can only be two places for the training of guidance personnel; one is the State Bureau and the other is the school with an effective functioning service. The Bureau should be the place for the production of guidance tools; it should also maintain a guidance service for "difficult cases" (just as a medical college runs a hospital). It should be a specialised agency not only in regard to the theory of guidance, but also in regard to its practice.

It is felt that the schools would be the best places for the training of teachers and parents. It is agreed by all educationists that task oriented training is the most effective kind of training. Teachers can be trained in guidance work, while participating in such work in schools in co-operation with the Teacher-Counsellors (the Specialists). The training may be carried on with directions from the School Guidance Committee and the School Staff-Council. It may be made clear that no formal classes for training are being visualised, but discussions and training (e.g. Rating Personality-traits in the Cumulative Record Card or Administration of Mental-tests to pupils) for the task in hand should result in making the teachers know, what they need to know. The task of educating the parents in guidance work may as well be entrusted to the school. Running of Children-Centred discussion groups of parents in schools should be the principal method for the training. It is suggested that the schools should have Parent-Teacher Associations class-wise (section-wise when the class has



more than one Section). Besides holding discussion groups of Parents and Teachers on the guidance of pupils in the class, the Association may also organise exhibition's, Film shows etc. and carry on other forms of activities (e.g. organising a Brains Trust to answer Parents' questions on guidance) which would lead to the orientation of parents to guidance work.

The State Bureau may also co-operate in the work of Parent-education, through the radio, cinema and the press. All India Radio may have a Parents Corner, once a month, conducted by the State Bureau. The State Publicity Department may also produce a few films every year in co-operation with the State Bureau for parent-education, and may have them systematically screened. Parent-education literature may be produced by the Bureau for utilisation by the Parent-teacher Associations.

It needs no saying that if the task of training teachers and parents in guidance work has to be undertaken by the schools, its head and its teacher-counsellor should have enough competence and adequate training. Hence the training of the heads of schools in guidance work should receive special emphasis. Along with the training of the heads of schools, we should also have to consider the training of Inspectors of Schools. This task has to be directly undertaken by the Bureau as its training potential for guidance work is considered as the highest in the State. The most important task in the training of heads of schools and the inspectors of schools is the development of favourable attitudes in them towards guidance work. They should also be given knowledge about the fundamental processes in guidance work. They should also develop skill in such guidance work which directly concerns them (e.g. preparing time-table to integrate guidance work with general work, evaluating the effectiveness of guidance work in a school etc.). It is felt that to achieve the above objective the duration of training of heads and inspectors of schools should not be less than a month.

Coming to the training of Guidance Specialists, the maximum emphasis should be given to the training of the Teacher-Counsellors. It is hoped that in the near future, every Multipurpose School, irrespective of the number of streams in it, shall have a Teacher-Counsellor. The Teacher-Counsellor is not only the guidance specialist in the school, but as we have tried to



maintain in an earlier chapter, he should be the technical know-how in regard to the school-methods and practices. The success of the in-service training of teachers and that of the education of parents will largely depend upon the effectiveness of the training of Teacher-Counsellors. As such the duration of the training of Teacher-Counsellors must not be less than a full academic year and the task cannot be entrusted to any institution other than the State Bureau. It is encouraging to note that the Ministry of Education, Government of India has accepted both these principles. For the success of the training it is also very important that the Teacher-Counsellors should possess the proper background (academic, training, experience) and personality traits. This brings in the question of proper salary grades for the Teacher-Counsellors, to attract the best people and also that of proper status for him in the school (the latter is a necessity for his success in his job). It is also very important to take the utmost care in the selection of Teacher-Counsellors. It should be specially noted that the training of the Teacher-Counsellors should be very practical in nature. It must not be merely theoretical and utopian.

At the conference of the heads of the State Bureaux under the auspices of the Ministry of Education, a three weeks training course was suggested for the Career-masters. It should be noted that (in view of the above suggested duration of the training) the field of the training of the Career-masters should be very limited, (necessarily their function would also be limited), to make the training effective. We should remember that defective training for any category of guidance personnel shall damage the cause of guidance at this stage of the development of the movement rather than foster it. It is suggested that the Career-masters may remain on apprenticeship in schools for a year after training, during which period the State Bureau should make a very close follow up of their activities. Career-masters in schools should be considered a make shift arrangement and it is hoped that during the Fourth Plan, all guidance specialists will become Teacher-Counsellors. The training of the Career-masters should also be the responsibility of the State Bureau. As, most of their work would be in the field of dissemination of information in regard to courses and careers, the State Bureau may seek the co-operation of the State National Employment Service



in the training of Career-masters. This has already been agreed in principle by both the Ministries of Education and Labour at the Centre. Probably, it is necessary to point out that the task cannot be left in the hands of the National Employment Service. The Career-masters shall have work (e.g. organisation of the maintenance of Cumulative Record Card) other than dissemination of information on courses and careers with which the National Employment Service is unfamiliar. Besides, even the task of dissemination of "occupational information" is an educational one.

Giving Career-talks, conducting excursions, organising exhibitions imply methods and techniques of which organisations like the National Employment Service are ignorant.

The State Bureau should also undertake the training of Regional Counsellors. It is desirable that the training of the Regional Counsellors and that of the Teacher-Counsellors should be done together to develop identity of outlook between them. A higher standard of training may be ensured in the following manner — (i) Insisting on a better background for the trainees (ii) Making some variations in their Courses (e.g. writing a thesis on some research project) (iii) The duration of the Courses should be extended (at least for three months more) to train them for their special jobs and also to carry their theoretical education to a higher standard.

The questions of Syllabi and the Staff required for training the different categories of guidance personnel need not be discussed in detail here. It may however be said, that the Syllabi which are followed should have a direct relevance to the different jobs which shall have to be performed by the different categories of guidance personnel. The principle which should be followed in running the training courses should be "learning by doing." The Syllabi should be task-oriented ones, presented in terms of practical work; the theory parts of the Syllabi should be inter-woven with their practical parts. In regard to the Staff for conducting the training, the number and their quality should be adequate to face the problem in an adequate manner. If serious efforts are made, and if parochialism is overcome, no State should find it difficult to man its State Bureau with adequate staff for conducting the training of guidance personnel. It may be noted that the Centre is alive to the problem. During the Third Plan it is com-

mitted to give cent per cent grants to the States for expanding the State Bureau for the above purpose. The training of guidance personnel cannot be successful, unless the State Bureaux organise a close follow-up of work after the training is over. In fact, the idea of technical supervision of technical personnel by the training institutions is gaining ground in modern times. Further, the training of the guidance personnel should not be regarded as complete, unless their work remains under close supervision of the Bureau for about a year on return to school — this period may be considered more or less like a period of apprenticeship.

### *Organisation of guidance work*

After discussing the problems of production of guidance tools and training of guidance personnel we should consider the problem of organising the guidance service in a State. It will have already been evident from the above discussion that we are visualising a three-tiered organisation (The State Bureau, The Regional Bureau and the School Guidance Service). The maximum emphasis, probably rightly, is being given to the organisation of the State Bureau and the School Guidance Services. During the Third Five Year Plan, the question of developing Regional Bureaux, has been shelved because of the lack of funds (the Central Government is not committed to any expenditure for the development of Regional Bureau). It is felt that School Guidance movement in a State should begin with the establishment of its State Bureau. During the course of the last five years, the role which a State Bureau may play has fairly been clarified; the Conferences of the heads of the State Bureaux, and the Annual meetings of the All India Association of Educational and Vocational Guidance have discussed the matter and the Government of India seems to have accepted the suggestions offered. The following are the agreed roles which a State Bureau should play — (a) Preparation of Guidance tools (b) Training of School-Guidance Personnel (c) Carrying on follow-up of guidance work in Schools, and co-ordinating of guidance activities in the State.

If the above activities are to be undertaken successfully, a State Bureau shall have to undertake responsibility for two other tasks — (1) Laying down in general the policies in regard to School Guidance work. The Bureau cannot undertake the



responsibility of this work alone. There should be a strong Advisory Committee for the Bureau, which should approve these policies before they are put into practice. This Committee may be constituted of the representatives of the following:— (I) State Directorate of Education (II) State Board of Secondary Education (III) Directorate of National Employment Service (IV) Vocational Training Institutions before and after the Higher Secondary School Examination (V) The Universities in the State (VI) Multipurpose Schools in the State.

It is unfortunate that the policy making role (in regard to School Guidance) of the State Bureau has not yet received official acceptance. As a body of specialists in the field of guidance, the State Bureau is the fit test body to initiate guidance schemes and frame guidance policies. But it should be duly advised by other relevant bodies in the State. As things stand at present, framing of guidance policies and initiating guidance schemes seems to be an administrative responsibility. The Ministry of Education, Government of India has, however, developed a healthy tradition, in this respect, by referring matters in regard to guidance to the Central Bureau of Educational & Vocational Guidance and by calling occasional conferences of the Heads of the State Bureaux. But, most of the States, have not developed even such precedents, with the result that school guidance work is not making satisfactory progress in the States as yet. It is suggested that the State Bureau with their Advisory Committees should be officially recognised as policy making bodies for School Guidance work.

(ii) Carrying on Guidance Research: It should be noted that we are bound to be faced by many problems of guidance whose answers shall have to be found through scientific researches. Again the tool-production activity of the State Bureau cannot also be carried on satisfactorily without undertaking necessary research. Carrying on guidance researches should be another responsibility of the State Bureau.

If the State Bureaux are to carry on the above functions satisfactorily, they should have proper staff and proper status. During the Second Five Year Plan, the Staff envisaged for State Bureaux by the Central Government was very meagre (A Director and three Counsellors). The status of the State Bureau was not also specifically fixed. In certain States they were merely parts a



Teachers' Training College and the Director of the Bureau held the status of that of a Lecturer. This wrong conception of the place of the Bureau in the Educational set-up of the States and minimising their importance greatly handicapped the progress of the guidance movement. In the Third Five Year Plan attempts are being made to rectify the mistakes of the Second Five Year Plan. The Centre is committed to bear 100% expenditure for the expansion of the State Bureaux. The State Bureau should be liberally staffed having three important wings — (a) Tool-production (b) Training (c) Follow-up. The status of the Director of the State Bureau should not be inferior to that of a Deputy Director of Public Instruction of the State. The Bureau should not be attached to any institution, it should be directly responsible to the State Directorate of Education. The function of the State Bureaux have been somewhat clarified, the functions of the School Guidance Services have as yet remained vague. It is evident that guidance work in all kinds of Secondary Schools cannot be of the same standard and cannot have the same objectives. But still there should be some general uniformity between them. In the last Conference, of the Heads of the State Bureaux (at the initiative of the Ministry of Education), a distinction has been made (in regard to the type of guidance work to be undertaken) between Schools having "Career-masters" and those having "Teacher-Counsellors." The terms Career masters and Teacher-Counsellors were however used arbitrarily to distinguish between two types of training of different durations; the Career-master is entrusted with the introduction of elementary guidance work in a school, while the Teacher-Counsellor is expected to develop a full-fledged guidance service for his school. The distinction between these two types of guidance work has been made, because it was felt to be unpracticable to try to introduce full-fledged guidance service in all our Secondary Schools at once with our existing resources. But, it is hoped that in the near future, every school shall have a Teacher-Counsellor on its staff and introduce a full-fledged guidance service. But during the Third Five Year Plan our target is to introduce the following guidance activities to every school — (1) Dissemination of information (among pupils and parents) in regard to Courses and Careers (2) Maintenance of records in a Cumulative manner



of the many sided development of pupils (abilities, attainments, interests, personality traits etc.). Schools having Teacher-Counselors, should undertake the following additional types of activities — (i) Matching every pupil to the jobs or courses available to him when he has to choose one of them (ii) Counselling every pupil in regard to the above (iii) Running remedial classes for the scholastically backward (iv) Running remedial clubs for the pupils suffering from problem behaviour. The “institutions” which have to be started in a school for carrying on guidance work has already been discussed before.

To carry on the above work systematically every school should establish a School Guidance Committee. It should be noted that the success of a school guidance service depends upon team-work between the Headmaster, Teacher-Counselors, other teachers in the school and the parents. The establishment of the School Guidance Committee is necessary to ensure this team-work. Representatives of teachers and parents, along with the Headmaster and the Teacher-Counselor, should sit on the Committee. It may be desirable to have the representatives of the local colleges, training institutions and employers in the Committee. It is unfortunate that special consideration has not yet been given to the organisation of the school guidance service and definite policies in regard to the above have not as yet been framed. No financial sanction has also been given for running the school guidance service. One or two States on their own, may have begun to give attention to these problems, but they are not as yet being tackled on All India-level. It should be pointed out that the proper organisation of the School-guidance Committee with clear statements of its functions and the sanction of adequate finances for its activities are essential for the success of School Guidance movement in our country.

The Third Five Year Plan, did not have adequate money to undertake the responsibility for setting up Regional Bureaux, the middle tier in the organisation of the school guidance service in a State. Regional Bureau are necessary for liaison between the State Bureaux and the School Guidance Committees within their jurisdiction. They are to offer technical co-operation to them in guidance work. The Regional Bureaux, should also co-operate with the State Bureaux in the production of guidance tools, in

co-ordination of guidance work in the State and in carrying on guidance research. Since no systematic efforts is to be made during the coming years for the development of Regional Bureaux in States we will not indulge here in a discussion about its work and organisation. There is one school of thought which believes that with a strong "follow-up-unit" in the State Bureau, with enlisting the support of Inspectors of Schools (who would receive some training in guidance work), and with effective training of Teacher-Counsellors, we may be able to dispense with the need for establishing Regional Bureau. Any way our experience during the coming years should help us in making up our mind in regard to the matter.

It is necessary to develop a few All India Organisations for co-ordinating guidance work throughout our country. A few organisations have already been developed for the purpose. But they have not been put on sound footings and their functions, particularly the division of fields of work between them, have not been clearly defined. As the Government of India, is taking the principle initiative in developing guidance services, there should be an All India body of experts to advise it in regard to its guidance policy. Tradition is developing to the effect that the Heads of the State Bureaux may function as this body. But the functions of this body and the number of meetings it may have in a year have not been finalised. In short, it is necessary to put this body of the Heads of the Guidance Bureaux on a formal footing. Its functions etc. should be specifically defined. The place of the Central Bureau of Educational and Vocational Guidance in the Committee should also be formalised. It is felt that the natural role of the Director of Central Bureaux on the Committee should be to serve as its ex-officio Secretary. The Central Bureau, at the request of the Committee of the Heads of Guidance Bureaux, may undertake certain co-ordinating activities (e.g. serving as a clearing house of information in regard to guidance work in India).

It is also desirable to have a non-official body, which would discuss the problems of guidance from a non-official and more academic level. This body may bring together all persons interested in guidance work whether their sphere of activity is in the school, college or any other field. The All India Association



of Educational and Vocational Guidance already established may be able to serve the purpose.

Besides the All India Organisations for guidance noted above, we have seen that necessity is being felt for the establishment of the All India Organisation for Test-development. This suggestion had been made in connection with the problem of production of guidance tools.

Finally it should be pointed that the success of the School Guidance Movement depends largely upon the development of social opportunities. At the present moment training facilities and job opportunities are hopelessly inadequate in our society. It is particularly difficult to suggest suitable training courses or jobs to pupils who are not considered suitable for higher secondary education. Again selection for training courses and jobs are not yet made on a scientific and objective basis. As such, advice given to an unindividual about his suitability to particular courses or jobs does not help him. It is therefore necessary that there should be a Central Committee in every State for framing the general principles according to which admission to different training and educational institutions should be made. The State Bureau of Educational and Vocational Guidance should be represented in this Committee. Admission to training and educational institutions should not be left to the favouritism or whims of the heads of those institutions. The above remarks are also applicable in case of employment to jobs. It is hoped that in the near future jobs will be filled through the Employment Exchanges and that the Exchanges will use scientific and objective methods in determining suitability of candidates to jobs.

It should be evident from the discussions in this Chapter, that an effective guidance service is essential for the success of Multipurpose Schools. Such services are unfortunately not provided in most of the Multipurpose Schools as yet; the task is not being faced with proper vision, sufficient conviction and determination. It appears that the Government of India intends to pursue a more vigorous policy in regard to guidance work in schools during the Third Plan Period. It is hoped that the State Governments will also pursue the matter with an equal amount of seriousness. But it should be pointed out that though the Government of

India, is committed to the adequate expansion of State Bureaux during the coming two years, it has not given the same amount of importance to the Staff and other requirements of the Guidance Services in schools. A part time Career-master, with three weeks training and no special pay and special status in schools, will be the only guidance worker in most of the schools. It is needless to say that they will be hopelessly inadequate for the task.



## CHAPTER XI

### SOME CRITICAL HUMAN PROBLEMS OF MULTIPURPOSE EDUCATION

IN THE last few Chapters of Part III of this study, we have endeavoured, on the basis of a critical examination of our findings as a result of our Questionnaire, and our combined knowledge and experience of progressive theory and practice of secondary education not only in India but in the U.K. & U.S.A., to put forward a series of practical suggestions on various important aspects of the Multipurpose school: its organisation and administration, its curriculum, its methods of teaching and testing, its Guidance services etc. In this Chapter we wish to focus special attention on certain critical human problems that have occurred in other countries experimenting with a Comprehensive or Multilateral pattern of secondary education, and which are cropping up in our own Multipurpose schools on an ever increasing scale. These problems are potentially explosive enough to wreck the entire Multipurpose scheme, hence suitable solutions must be sought, if not to overcome them altogether, at least to mitigate them as far as lies in our power to do so.

The problems which we have singled out for special attention are the vexed problems of selection or allocation between the various diversified courses; the problem of parity of esteem between these diversified courses; and the problem of wastage — these three problems are closely interrelated, and form together the most intractable group of problems in the field of secondary education today, not only in India but all over the world. One other important problem which we feel deserves special consideration is the problem of premature and excessive specialisation. We shall deal with each of these four vital problems in turn, and endeavour to suggest at least a partial solution.

In the 19th Century, as we have pointed out, secondary education was conceived to be a well-defined type of education, largely academic and book centered, leading to the University and learned professions and meant only for a small social and intellectual elite, in contrast to elementary education in the elements of the 3Rs. for the masses. In our century, however, it has been slowly but inevitably realised, at first in educationally progressive countries like the U.S.A. and U.K., and now in developing countries like our own, that the secondary education of every child is a stage which is a natural continuation of elementary or primary education and which spans the period of early and later adolescence from eleven plus to fourteen to seventeen. The clear realisation of this inescapable educational fact has brought in its train many difficult problems. It has become obvious, for instance, that what till now has been recognised as secondary education is only one among many types of secondary education, and that it is suited only a minority of adolescent of secondary school going age; for the greater majority, new, and, in many cases, very different types of secondary education would have to be evolved. Such differential types of education can be provided, as they generally are in the U.K., despite its many Multilateral or Comprehensive schools, in three distinct types of secondary schools — Secondary Grammar schools providing the traditional type of academic secondary education whether with an Arts or a Science bias, Secondary Technical schools providing a general education with a technical bias, and Secondary Modern schools providing a general education with a practical bias. Or it can be provided in one and the same school, as it is in the Comprehensive Schools in the U.S.A., and the Omnibus Schools in Scotland, or as is being attempted in our own Multipurpose schools.

Multipurpose schools in India are endeavouring, through the provision of diversified courses, to provide an appropriate type of secondary education for pupils of varying abilities, aptitudes, interests and vocational ambitions. In such schools all pupils follow a similar course of studies from Class VI and Class VIII, but at the end of this class, the Delta Class, they have to choose in which of the diversified course — Humanities, Science, Technical, Home Science, Commerce, Fine Arts — provided by their



respective schools they will specialise. This brings us to the first, and perhaps the most complex and explosive problem facing educational administrators, Heads, parents and pupils — the problem of Selection or Allocation. This problem is aggravated in a situation such as obtains the L.E.A.'S in England where, on the results of the famous, or notorious, Eleven Plus examination, primary school children are allocated to the three different types of Secondary schools, about 20% of the most intelligent being sent to the traditional, highly coveted Grammar schools, another 10%, "the second cram," to the Technical schools, and the remaining 70%, "the also rans," to the Modern schools. But even though its impact is not so harsh, yet the problem of selection is hardly less acute in a Multilateral or Multipurpose school.

In one respect we in India have circumvented one of the main criticisms against the selective process in England, that the selection for different type of secondary education is made too early, for at Eleven plus neither has the intelligence fully developed, nor have special aptitudes clearly revealed themselves. By putting off the selection till 13 or 14 plus, we have avoided this pitfall, for by this age, most psychologists agree, the intelligence is more or less at its peak development; special aptitudes are also evident, interests are beginning to be fairly marked, and vocational ambitions to take a definite shape. Further, while an initial choice is made at 13 or 14, it can be reviewed after a year and adjustments made if considered necessary. Hence the argument that the selection has to be made too early is not as tenable in India as it is in England.

This fact, however, does not make the right choice less critical for whom the correctness of this choice will depend not only the success of the student in his final examination but his future career; for instance a student who chooses Humanities at the end of Class VIII, and passes his Higher Secondary School Certificate with a Humanities bias, will be automatically excluded from a whole range of professions such as medicine, engineering etc. which demand a H.S.C. certificate with a Science bias for entry into the appropriate training institution.

The problem is made more difficult in view of the fact that a dual decision of far reaching consequences has to be made at the



end of Class VIII.

The first, and the most heartbreaking decision, may be simply stated. Has this pupil the basic intelligence and the other qualities necessary to enable him to start out on the long and exacting course of studies leading to the Higher Secondary Certificate with any real hope of ultimate success? The considered view expressed by the Heads that only 50% to 60% of their students were really fitted for Higher Secondary education highlights the point and poignancy of the first decision.

"Only a minority of pupils of any age group," states an important Education Report in Scotland "have the ability necessary to allow them to follow a Certificate course with credit (The Certificate referred to is the Scottish Senior Secondary School Certificate—Editors' note). To permit others to embark on these courses would therefore be a grave mistake; not only would this do the pupils a grave disservice since they would be attempting something they could not hope to achieve instead of following a course designed specifically to suit them in pace and content, but it would also hamper the progress of those for whom the certificate course are appropriate. It follows that some form of selection for admission to the Certificate course is essential."

In Scotland it is reckoned that not more than 25% of pupils of Secondary age are fitted for these Certificate courses, in England only 20% of the pupils at Eleven plus are allocated to the Secondary Grammar School to prepare for the General Certificate of Education; in the U.S.A. it is reckoned that approximately 20% of students at the Comprehensive High Schools are fitted for "College preparatory courses." In India, on the contrary, it appears to be openly or tacitly assumed that every pupil who enters the Higher Secondary School in Class VI has the ability and aptitude to pass the Higher Secondary School Certificate examination six years later! It is high time that educational administrators, Heads and teachers, who ought to know better, faced up to the facts of life in this regard and began to educate parents and guardians to realise that, unpalatable as the truth may be, not every child admitted to the Higher Secondary School in Class VI will be automatically permitted to start on the Higher Secondary course of studies in Class IX. In short a decision must be made at the end of Class VIII as to whether a pupil is



fit for Higher Secondary studies, or whether he should be diverted to one of a variety of alternative types of secondary education of a general cum vocational character.

On what basis should this selection be made? If the school has an effective School Guidance Service such as has been recommended in Chapter X, there ought not to be much difficulty in this matter. On the basis of the Cumulative School Records of the past three years, of the results of tests devised by various State Guidance Bureaux and of scaled teachers estimates it should be possible to divide pupils into three broad groups —

- (1) Those who are definitely fit for Higher Secondary education
- (2) those who are definitely unfit for this type of education
- (3) those who are borderline cases. The first category may be safely permitted to choose their diversified course and start preparation on the Higher Secondary course; the third group should be allowed to choose for themselves, and, if they choose the Higher Secondary course, promoted on trial to Class IX and their position reviewed at the end of the year. For the second group, various courses of a specially vocational nature requiring a lower level of intelligence and a higher level of special abilities on the model of the Junior Technical Certificate Course (Similar courses can and should be framed in Home Science, Commerce, Agriculture) and trade courses, suited to different aptitudes and level of intelligence, such as are being provided at Trade schools and Industrial Training Institutes for Boys, should be provided (similar courses should be devised in appropriate trades for girls). Unless those who are definitely unsuitable for the existing Higher Secondary courses are diverted after Class VIII, or Class IX at the very latest, to alternative types of secondary education better suited to their abilities and aptitudes there will be very great frustration and wastage in our Multipurpose schools.

On the human plane it will no doubt be a difficult and delicate task to convince such students, and still more their parents and guardians, that they lack the basic ability and aptitude to pursue the traditional, prestigious, University entrance Higher Secondary Courses, and that they should opt for what will appear to them an inferior type of secondary education. Experience has shown that the pupils themselves, as a result of repeated failures of one type or another in their passage up to Class VIII, are gene-



rally aware of and prepared to accept their own deficiencies and limitations, frustrating though the experience may be, rather than shoulder the more frustrating burden of attempting what is clearly beyond them. To convince their parents is a much more difficult proposition; it is practically impossible to convince a parent that his son or daughter lacks the innate ability for Higher Secondary studies — he takes it almost as a personal insult, and, in his attempt to rationalise his son's failure to make the grade, puts forth an array of reasons and excuses and usually attempts to clinch the argument in favour of permitting his son to pursue High Secondary studies by stating that he will employ a tutor or tutors who will get his son up to the standard! None is so blind as he who chooses to be blind, and it is almost impossible to convince such parents that no amount of coaching will provide the boy with the fundamental intelligence and other allied qualities which he lacks.

The blindness of parents to the basic deficiencies of their wards must be sympathetically handled. It is understandable that in the very competitive society that exists in India today there is felt to be little future for a boy or girl who does not possess at least a Higher Secondary School Certificate; yet these parents must be made to realise that, if they force their wards into a course for which they are basically unsuitable, it will result in great personal frustration and failure for them, and the development of an inferiority complex that will dog them through life. Further, it will mean that they will, after 3-5 years, leave school without either any School-leaving Certificate or any vocational training which will make them complete misfits. Further, it can be pointed out to such parents that if their wards are given a broadly vocational education, suited to their ability and aptitudes, they will have a brighter future as skilled craftsman in an industrially developing India than those pupils who with a Higher Secondary Certificate or a degree who drift into low paid white-collar clerical posts.

The second important decision which pupils and the guardians, in consultation with the school authorities, are required to make, (if the former are judged suitable for a Higher Secondary education) in which field of specialisation they should choose from the various diversified courses open to them. In practice (the choice should be wider — boys or girls being advised to transfer to



another school if their own institution is not providing the course of their choice) this choice is usually restricted to one of three streams. These streams are usually Humanities, Science, and either Technical or Commerce in the case of Boys schools, and Humanities, Commerce, and either Home Science or Fine Arts in Girls schools. In theory these courses should have parity of esteem in the eyes of pupils and guardians, and the pupils' choice should be made objectively as a result of a dispassionate consideration of his own abilities, aptitudes, interests and vocational ambitions. But, as we shall point out a little further in this chapter, even though all the diversified courses at present provided in Multipurpose schools lead to the University there is no parity of esteem between them. As a result, extraneous considerations enter into the choice of course, because some courses e.g. science enjoy a much greater prestige in the eyes of the parents and pupils than others. This fact poses a human problem for it creates difficulties and complicates relationships within the school itself and between the school authorities and parents and guardians. Further the Teacher-Counsellor of a school may be corrupted by the new power in his hands. He may develop the idea that he is in a position to shower privileges on pupils and parents in the form of sanctioning their enrolment to courses according to their wishes. This privileged position is resented by his colleagues, as a result of which he does not get as much co-operation as he expects from them. From practical experience in this field of work it can be said that Teacher-Counsellors in general are apt to complain about their colleagues, while teachers in general seem to feel that the Teacher-Counsellors are enjoying unwarranted status and privileges. Further with their theoretical knowledge to back them, Teacher-Counsellors are sometimes found to challenge even the authority of the Headmaster in the matter of allocation (selection) of pupils to the diversified courses. Instances are not rare where the Headmasters consider the Teacher-Counsellor an undesirable intruder to the field of power over which they have so long enjoyed a monopoly. The School Managing Committee is also tending to extend its influence into the new field of power which is developing in Multipurpose schools. This situation is bringing local politics into the orbit of the school. Allocation of pupils to the course desired by the parents is being treated as a favour which may be



distributed by the school administration according to its whims. Instances have occurred where conflicts between Teacher-Counsellor, Headmaster and the Managing Committee have gone so far that intervention by higher authorities has been sought.

Conversion of what should have been a problem of guidance to one of selection also has serious effects on the mental health of pupils. Frustrations at not being selected for a course enjoying great prestige, and, conversely, loss of status at being forced into a course having lower prestige, jeopardises the mental health of pupils. Again pupil teacher, and pupil relationships and relationships between the parents and the school authorities are also being vitiated. Parents on the one hand are convinced that the school is unnecessarily interfering with their privilege of educating their children according to their desires, it is sacrificing the interests of their children to its whims. On the other hand, the school authorities hold that parents, because of their unenlightened views, unreasonably interfere with the school's smooth working, they are creating unnecessary difficulties, they are jeopardising the interests of their own children, and the good name of the school. In short, allocation of pupils to the diversified courses has developed as an other area creating undesirable tensions between parents and teachers.

It is apprehended that these tensions in relationships will be intensified with the development of vocational courses in Multipurpose schools. University courses have such a great prestige in the eyes of the Indian public that any course not leading up to the University, (whatever may be its other advantages), ranks very low in public esteem, the gulf between the prestige of the different courses would therefore further increase. The answer to the challenge lies to a great extent in the development of an effective Guidance Service in every school.

Allocation of pupils to the various courses in a Multipurpose school would pose fewer administrative and human problems if there was real parity of esteem between the various courses, both intrinsically and in the overall pattern of the future education and vocations to which they lead. To establish such parity is the second major problem of Multipurpose schools on which attention needs to be specially focused, for, unless this condition is fulfilled, the primary educational feature of the Multipurpose school which



is to provide differential types of secondary education to enable the school to fit the education provided to the individual child will not be fulfilled. Does any measure of real parity exist between the present diversified courses in Multipurpose schools? And, if, as we have recommended, more specifically vocational, life-entrance courses are added to the present largely academic, University-entrance courses, what chances of establishing parity between the two categories of courses would there be? On the basis of the answers to their Questionnaire, the authors are in a position to answer these questions with a fair degree of accuracy.

The Heads who answered the Questionnaire, unanimously and empathically stated that the various diversified courses at present offered in their schools did not enjoy parity of esteem in the eyes of pupils and their parents. In the Boy's schools the Science Course was way ahead of the others in priority of appeal and popularity with both parents and boys, with Technical, Commerce and Humanities a poor second, third, and fourth respectively. As a result two thirds of the schools report that their Science courses are overcrowded, while their Humanities and Commerce courses have vacancies. Indeed so strong is the lure of the Science course that many Heads stated that students are withdrawn from their respective schools if they are not permitted to take Science, and any school which can offer vacancies in its Science Course is sure to attract the best students from other schools which lack facilities for Science. Indeed it is only when they are completely debarred from Science in their own schools, and cannot squeeze into some other school for it, that the majority of students who opt for them grudgingly take Humanities or Commerce. This craze for Science has spread also to Girls schools, and Science is rapidly outstripping the traditional Humanities and Commerce Courses that have enjoyed great popularity and esteem with girls till recently. Hence, in practice, the Science course is attracting the best boys, and many of the best girls, whether or not they are really interested in Science or have an aptitude for it, and the other courses get the 'also rans' which affects the prestige and morale of both boys and girls unwillingly forced into them, and their teachers! Further, the idea is rapidly gaining ground among both boys and girls and the parents, and is, alas, infecting school authorities, Heads and teachers who should know better, that the Science course is a must



for their intellectual elite, and that the other courses are meant for the average and below average. This is, from a broad educational point of view, a great tragedy, and, if this fallacy is not pricked soon, it will undermine the Multipurpose school and do a grave disservice not only to many of the boys and girls themselves but also to the nation. It is true that India needs top-level scientists; she also needs first rate administrators and lawyers, poets and artists, technicians and skilled craftsman for which the other existing diversified courses, and the vocational courses we have advocated are a much better preparation. Hence pupils, parents, school authorities and the public at large will have to be educated to realise the fallacies that underline the false prestige they give to some types of courses over others.

The problem of parity of esteem between the different courses is largely a psychological and educational one. Prejudices and wrong notions have given rise to the problem. For example, it is wrong to believe that every individual is capable of the same performance in the same field. The existence of individual differences is a scientifically established truth. Is it a prejudice to associate the idea of superiority or inferiority with it. If one pupil is better in verbal than number abilities, and another pupil is better in number ability than in verbal ability, the former should not be considered as inferior to the latter, it merely implies that the pupils concerned are likely to excel in two different fields (the former in Humanities and the latter in Science.) The glamour of University courses as contrasted to non-university ones in the eyes of the Indian public is also due to the existence of certain prejudices. Over-crowding of certain courses may also be due to wrong information and wrong beliefs. For example, it is wrong to think that every body taking up the Science course is sure of a good job. Those who do well in Science are more or less certain to do well in our society, but those who fall below the standard or are on the borderline would certainly have better vocational prospects if they selected courses in which they are expected to do better. Making pupils aware of their own strong and weak points will also help to dispel prejudices in the field of course selection. It is a fact that pupils do not have a clear understanding of the abilities which they possess and do not possess. They are not aware of the educational and vocational



fields in which they have the best chances of success, nor are they clear about the prospects in these fields. Hence attempts at doing away with prejudices and removing wrong ideas through the School Guidance Service should help in developing parity of esteem in the eyes of the pupils and the parents among the different courses available in Multipurpose schools. This should also reduce excessive pressure on certain courses, and if the desire for admission to the different courses becomes more balanced, the problem of allocation need not turn into a critical matter of selection as is the case at the present moment.

Through proper personal counselling, a good Guidance Service should also be able to reduce the intensity of frustration which may be felt by pupils at being rejected for admission to the desired courses. It should also succeed in restoring the status of the pupils in the eyes of class mates and parents.

Organisation of an effective Guidance Service in a democratic manner, which allows teachers and parents to share responsibilities along with the Teacher-Counsellor and the Head of the school, should ease many of the tension in relationships which develops in the school in the process of election for the diversified courses.

A national survey a couple of years ago revealed that as a result of a process of natural selection and survival of the fittest of every hundred students who joined Class VI in High Schools in India only fifty remained in Class X, of whom approximately twenty five matriculated. These were startling figures. A closer examination of the situation revealed that the fault lay with the schools as much as with the pupils, and that the aims and content of secondary education were in need of a more or less a radical overhaul so that the nation's High schools could be fitted to the pupils and not vice versa. With this overall objective in view the Mudaliar Commission suggested diversified types of secondary education should be provided, preferably in Multipurpose schools, to cater for the varying abilities, aptitudes, interests, and vocational ambitions of pupils. The Commission hoped that by diversifying secondary education at the High school, and gearing it to be terminal education for the majority of pupils and a College — preparatory education only for a minority, it would, *inter alia*, reduce considerably the High incidence of human wastage from India, High schools and thereby increase their utility and

efficiency.

How far has this hope been realised ? The authors on the basis of the opinions of the Heads of such schools are in a position to tentatively answer this question.

"On the basis of your experience over the last three years what percentage of the pupils in your school do you seriously consider fit for High Secondary education ?" To this direct question, somewhat varied answers were given by the Heads. Ten of the Heads were of the opinion that 35-50% of their students were suitable, two put the percentage between 51 and 60% two at 75% two at 80% and one each at 90-95 and 100%. On the average it would appear that from 30% to 40% of the students in Multipurpose schools are regarded as misfits by the majority of Heads of those schools. Further, answers to other parts of our questionnaire revealed that while relatively few students dropped out before the end of Class VIII, between this Class and Class XI the percentage of drop-outs was 10%-15% on an average, and this figure coupled with the fact that the percentage of passes in the last Higher Secondary school examination of the Board of Secondary Education West Bengal was approximately 60% puts the overall wastage figure of Multipurpose school at approximately 45-50%. This wastage figure in the Multipurpose High school is a definite improvement on the corresponding figure of 75% of the Class X High Schools, but it is high enough for all those interested in the future of these schools to sit up and take serious notice of it.

To delve more deeply into this tragic human problem, questions were framed to uncover the etiology of such failures and drop-outs in our Multipurpose schools, and to seek possible remedies. In order of priority the following, in the Heads considered opinion, were the causes of failure of pupils who were unable to make the grade in their schools—lack of suitable home background, general backwardness due to psychological and sociological reasons other than lack of intelligence, development of undesirable interests and behaviour patterns, and finally the corrupt atmosphere of the country. An added and significant reason, not mentioned by any of the Heads, was brought out in their answers to a question as to whether any special facilities were provided for backward and retarded children in their schools, for, unless backwardness is discovered early and remedied by



special treatment, the backward child, who is not always dull, is a potential drop-out. Half the Heads stated they made no special provision for backward children, the other half stated they did, but, pressed to be precise as to the nature and extent of such provision, fell back on the vague statement "individual attention is given to such pupils".

That the Heads, by and large, appeared to feel little or no responsibility for real or potential 'early-leavers' was shown in their replies to the leading question: What educational provision would you suggest for such drop-outs? Many heads maintained a discreet silence; those who answered the question suggested vocational training in some other institution thus washing their hands of all responsibility in this matter. A typical reply was "They should be sent to Trade schools in the locality. No provision can be made for them in this school." Requested a little later, in the questionnaire to suggest ways and means of improving the educational situation in their schools, so far as real and potential misfits were concerned, the Heads suggested the following measures: a change of home environment; improved-Home-school relationships; greater personal contact and more effective guidance; a State wide examination at the end of the Class VIII to select those fit for higher secondary education; the starting of more residential schools; all-age primary *cum* secondary schools in which specially graded and integrated courses can be provided from Class I to Class XI; strengthening of elementary education from Class I to VIII to provide a better foundation for work in the last three years; improvement for socially and of moral standards, creation of a truly Indian atmosphere in the schools to replace the present pseudo-British one; special coaching for backward pupils; diversion of the unfit to trade courses, a longer school day with free school tiffin thrown in; the use of better methods of teaching, especially in the direction of an increased use of the school library; and, finally, a re-orientation programme for pupils, parents and teachers to make them conversant with the significance and difficulties of the Multipurpose school.

These are, individually and collectively, promising lines of approach towards the resolution of a complex problem. Most of them fortunately can be tried out in the school themselves.



and if tried sincerely are certain to achieve beneficial results. The problem of actual and possible wastage in Multipurpose school is crucial. One the acid tests of the success or failure of the Multipurpose schools will lie in the extent to which they face up to and find a partial, if not a total solution to it. This solution, we are of the considered opinion, must be found largely in the Multipurpose schools themselves—they must not pass the buck, or they will not be true to their title as “Multipurpose” schools.

Another important problem which needs special consideration in a Multipurpose school is the danger of premature and excessive specialisation. Formerly students at the school stage followed a fairly wide curriculum containing a balance of arts and science subjects. On paper, it appears as if the curriculum of the multipurpose school is even broader and more liberal, for all students make contact in the Core curriculum with the three broad areas of human knowledge, the Humanities, the Natural Sciences and the Social Sciences—and, besides the head, the hand (a neglected factor in the past) is catered for in the compulsory prescription of a Craft. And, in addition to the “general education” provided by Core curriculum, the student also specialises in one of the diversified courses. The objective of the Multipurpose school is thus to provide a broad general education with a specialist bias. Theoretically this may be so, but in practice the position is often very different.

Largely because the majority of the core subjects are only to be internally examined, and because they are dropped (at least in West Bengal) after Class IX or Class X, both students, and unfortunately school authorities, tend to pay inadequate attention to them. Attention from Class IX to Class XI tends to be concentrated mainly on the three elective subjects from the chosen stream, and, to a less extent, on the two languages for it is upon their showing in these five subjects that students know this final division will depend. The result is often a degree of premature and over specialisation that is most unwholesome, for it is likely to lead to the Multipurpose schools turning out “illiterate” Science and technical students, and ‘innumerate’ Humanities and Commerce students.

This danger must be constantly kept in mind by the School authorities, and efforts made to counteract it. The following



measures are suggested with a view to ensuring that all pupils in Multipurpose schools are given a broad, liberal and balanced education, in addition to their specialisation in a particular field.

1. Heads should make a special effort to see that the Core subjects are honestly, sincerely, and effectively taught. Special care should be taken to teach General Science and Elementary Mathematics to Humanities, Commerce and Fine Arts students, and Social Studies to Science and Technical students, and adequate time should be provided for them in the Time-Table.

2. Art-Craft, Music and P.T., and moral and religious instruction should be added to the Core Curriculum to broaden and enrich it.

3. Since the time available for class teaching is limited, and the number of subjects to be fitted into the Multipurpose Time-Table is large, especially in Classes IX and X, it will be impossible to provide enough time for all the ingredients of a liberal education in the Time-Table. Special care will have to be taken, therefore, to plan a rich co-curricular programme, specifically geared to supplementing and filling the gaps in the curricular programme. Clubs and Societies, such as a Science Club, Hobbies Club, a Social Studies Club, a literary, Dramatic and Debating society will help students to apply the knowledge gained in the class-room to real life situations and will supplement and enrich that knowledge. They will also provide scope for talents which are only too often inadequately provided for, or completely starved in the class-room situation. Special care will have to be taken in guiding students in the choice of co-curricular activities so that gaps in their class-room programme can be filled; the authorities, for instance, should ensure that non-Science students belong to and take an active part in the Science club which should not be dominated by the Science boys. Similarly, science boys should be encouraged to play a leading role in the Literary, Dramatic and Debating society. Again topics chosen for debates should meet the needs of all the diversified courses and boys and girls encouraged to speak on topics not pertaining to their field of specialisation. Measures such as these will ensure that the ideal of a broad, balanced, liberal education is not sacrificed to the insistent claims of premature and excessive specialisation.

These are some of the very special problems facing Multipurpose schools which need careful study and research so that adequate solutions to them can be found. Unless ways and means are speedily found of mitigating considerably, if we cannot completely solve these problems, the entire Multipurpose experiment will be a grave jeopardy.



## CHAPTER XII

### THE FUTURE OF THE MULTIPURPOSE SCHOOL

IN THE earlier Chapters of this book, we have endeavoured to explore the historical evolution of the Multipurpose School Idea and its embodiment in schools, variously called Comprehensive schools in the U.S.A., Comprehensive or Multilateral schools in the U.K. and Multipurpose schools in India. In part one of this survey we examined the theoretical foundations, educational and sociological of the Multipurpose idea, and concluded that, stripped of certain exaggerations and sociological bases of dubious validity, they were, for the most part, sound. In Part II, we examined to what extent and with what success the Multipurpose idea had been made a working reality in some of the leading institutions of this type in the State of West Bengal with a view to locating the main obstacles that stood in the way of its more effective realisation in practice. In Part III, we went on to suggest how the strong points of the Multipurpose school could be further strengthened, and how some of the many existing weaknesses could be mitigated, if not entirely eliminated. In this final Chapter we shall attempt a tentative but nevertheless fairly definitive answer to the burning educational question of the day in the field of Secondary education in India: Have Multipurpose schools a future?

The question may appear to be rhetorical in view of the official policy of the Central and State governments; yet it is being seriously asked, and the answers are not always, as one would expect them to be, in the unqualified affirmative.

In point of fact, for a variety of reasons, the shoe is often on the other foot. The honey-moon period of the Multipurpose school appears to be over, and many administrators, heads and teachers all over the country are seriously questioning, not only



whether the Multipurpose experiment has been or will be a success, but whether it was ever necessary in the first place! Examples of this disillusioned attitude are not hard to find. At a recent Convention on Secondary Education, organised by the All India Federation of Secondary Education, the consensus of opinion appeared to be that the scheme of Higher Secondary education, which is an integral part of the Multipurpose experiment, had failed, and that it had been an obstacle rather than a help to the progress of secondary education in the country. Again, at a recent meeting of the Central Advisory Board of Education, a proposal was seriously mooted by the Madras Government, supported by some other State Governments, that the existing Higher Secondary pattern of eleven years schooling on the Multipurpose pattern, followed by a Three Year Degree Course, should be replaced by the old pattern of the Ten Year High School, a two year Intermediate, and a two year degree course. It is true the proposal was defeated, but it is significant that it should have been made at all! Still more significant and disquieting was the admission by Dr. Shrimali, the Education Minister at the Centre, at the meeting of State Education Ministers held in October 1962 the Multipurpose education had not succeeded to the extent anticipated, and his disclosure that some States had abruptly wound up these schools, without giving them a fair trial, a measure which Dr. Shrimali stated he personally regretted very much. And, in their deliberations with fellow administrators, heads and teachers in their own State, and in other States, the authors have found that the number of unbelievers, septs and downright cynics, even among those who are committed to successfully working out the Multipurpose idea in practice, is legion. In fact, by a strange ambivalence of attitudes many educators, who officially and publicly are in the forefront of the Multipurpose experiment, in private are either pessimistic about the chances of its ultimate success, or beset with grave misgivings. And, perhaps, what is even more disquieting and dangerous is that even among the ranks of the staunchest advocates and most vocal supporters of the Multipurpose school are to be found far too many administrators, heads and teachers who understand so little about, and who are so uncritical in their approach to the many deep complexities and pitfalls of the Multipurpose experiment, that in the long run they



are likely to do it more harm than good. The prayer 'Lord save me from my friends' is in fact as necessary in the case of the Multipurpose Schools as it is in the case of many other good causes !

With the above reservations in mind, we return in all seriousness to one original question. Has the Multipurpose school a future in India ?

Taking all the evidence, on the theoretical as well as in the practical planes, which we have assembled and analysed in Part I and Part II of our book, and balancing the pros and cons and the strengths and weaknesses of this new type of institution for imparting secondary education, our considered verdict is 'Yes,' *provided* we conduct our Multipurpose experiment along the correct lines and plan and organise our Multipurpose schools in such a manner that it will really live up to the great expectations which its sponsors reposed in it.

In Part III of our book, drawing on the experience gleaned from a critical study of the Comprehensive and Multilateral schools in the U.K. and U.S.A., and of relevant data revealed by a *critical study of some of our best Multipurpose schools in practice*, we have endeavoured to lay down essential minima in certain key aspects of the *organisation and administration of Multipurpose schools* which we consider should be fulfilled in these schools are to be a real success, and to achieve all that is expected of them. It only remains for us to gather together the threads of all that has preceded, to knit them together in a flexible, coherent pattern, and to lay down working workable guidelines for the future development of Multipurpose schools in our country.

#### THE THEORETICAL BASIS OF MULTIPURPOSE EDUCATION : GUIDELINES

1. The Multipurpose school, for a start, should not be regarded as a panacea for all the ills to which secondary education in India has been heir to in the past, or is likely to suffer from in the future, nor should it be regarded in the only possible form of organisation for Secondary Education in our country. India needs Multipurpose schools, but, side by side there also remains need for separate, specialised types of secondary schools. For

while, as experience in the U.K. and U.S.A. has shown the Multipurpose or Comprehensive school appears to be the only feasible administrative solution for a small urban or rural locality where there is only scope for a single Secondary school, in larger Industrial areas it may sometimes be found to be more effective to provide a variety of Multipurpose, Bilateral and unilateral, specialised High schools to meet the diverse educational needs and interests of the entire adolescent population of the area.

II. The next point that needs re-emphasis is that the Multipurpose school is not an accomplished educational fact, but still very much in the experimental stage. In point of fact it has still to justify itself, for the first students of these schools are just passing into the world, and they have yet to prove themselves the equals or superiors of boys and girls from the traditional High schools. To talk and act as if these schools have been weighed in the balance and not found wanting, to take them for granted, or to minimise their difficulties and pitfalls would therefore do more harm than good, and might very well lead to the eventual failure of the Multipurpose experiment. The Multipurpose experiment is only likely to succeed if it is carefully planned, supervised and nursed; if all these engaged in making it a success, administrators, heads and teachers and parents and the community at large are made fully aware of its many-sided implications, its strengths and its weaknesses; and if they work together in fruitful partnership to capitalise on the former, and to mitigate if they cannot entirely eliminate, the latter. The greatest single obstacles to the successful working out of the Multipurpose school experiment, in our considered opinion, are cynicism and deliberate obstruction on the one hand, and complacency and lethargy on the other.

III. The Multipurpose experiment has been launched on a nationwide scale, and thousands of such schools have been started over the length and breadth of the country. The vast scale of this experiment is likely to militate to an extent against its success. Experience has already revealed inadequate co-ordination between State and State, and not enough give-and-take of experience between them so that the Multipurpose schools of one State can cross fertilise those of another, and vice versa. It is hoped that the recently established National Council of Education and Research, and the Kothari Commission will take up this matter



and bring about the necessary degree of basic uniformity, co-ordination and cross fertilisation of Multipurpose theory and practice throughout the country. This is a consummation devoutly to be wished if the Multipurpose experiment is to be a real and lasting success, not only in one or two States but all over the country.

IV. While such fruitful interchange of ideas between the Central and the State Governments concerning the theory and practice of Multipurpose education with a view to cross fertilisation is necessary, any attempt at regimentation or the introduction of a rigid standard pattern for Multipurpose schools should not be the objective of the Central and State Education Ministries. Since the Multipurpose school is very much in a fluid and experimental stage, a very real degree of autonomy must be given to the State Governments by the Centre, and, in turn, delegated by the State Governments to the Multipurpose schools themselves, to work out the experiment in a manner best suited to local conditions. Certain broad guidelines will have to be laid down, such as are provided by Examining Bodies for the various School — leaving Examinations for which Multipurpose schools are, or may be presenting their candidates, and by the Education Directorate, with regard to staffing, curricula accommodation, furniture and equipment. But a real degree of flexibility and independence, within broad limits, must be given to the School authorities, so that they can experiment and break new ground. The current tendency on the part of the Central Ministry of Education to impose a standardised all-India pattern for Multipurpose Schools on State Governments, which, in turn, impose their pattern on the schools themselves should thereof be reversed, so that the State Governments and the individual schools will be free, within broad limits, to experiment and to work out their own variations on a common pattern. Freedom, flexibility and experiment, and variety should be the keynote of the Multipurpose experiment or else it will be in danger of being stifled in masses of regulations and bureaucratic red tape.

V. Another drawback that springs from the very size of the Multipurpose experiment is that it is difficult to make a really intensive study of the actual working out of an educational experiment on such an extensive scale. Hence it is vitally



important that a few schools in each State should be singled out for intensive study by teams of experts with a view to glean valuable information and experience as to the basic pre-conditions to be fulfilled if the Multipurpose school is to function effectively, the obstacles that are likely to be encountered in the day-to-day working of such a school, and the means by which they can be overcome or circumvented. A pilot scheme of this type should in our opinion, have been operated before the Multipurpose school experiment was launched on a country wide basis. This was, unfortunately, not done, but it is yet not too late to do it; it should be put into effect immediately so that our infant Multipurpose schools may be helped to grow into a healthy childhood, and gradually to reach full maturity.

The ultimate objectives of the Multipurpose schools as outlined by the Mudaliar Commission can hardly be improved upon. Whether these objectives can be, or are being realised in practice by our Multipurpose schools, as they are organised and conducted at present, is however, questionable. In the various Chapters of this book, we have endeavoured to pinpoint strategic areas in which the existing Multipurpose schools fall short of the many-sided objectives they were created to achieve. In this final Chapter we shall once again single out a few improvements which need to be effected before our Multipurpose schools can measure up to the high hopes reposed in them.

#### BASIC OBJECTIVES OF MULTIPURPOSE SCHOOLS

The Multipurpose school was designed to cater, not for an intellectual socio-economic elite but for a cross-section of our adolescent population, representing a variety of abilities and aptitudes, and a fairly wide range of intelligence. In order that these schools could do justice to this representative cross-section of adolescents, the Mudaliar Commission postulated that they should provide a College-preparatory education for a minority of able pupils, and a terminal life-preparatory, vocationally biased education and training for the majority. In actual practice, however, the curricula and syllabuses for the Higher Secondary School Certificate, the School — leaving certificate for the pupils of these schools, having been framed by panels of experts drawn



chiefly from the Universities, have been geared almost exclusively to University entrance requirements. This has led to two gravely unsatisfactory results. The first is that the Higher Secondary School Certificate is a College-entrance rather than a life-entrance Certificate, this puts it intellectually beyond the reach of a large percentage of the adolescents studying at Multipurpose schools who are, on leaving these schools, fit neither for College nor a job. The second is that even those diversified courses—technical, agricultural, Home Science and Commerce—which were perhaps specifically meant to be terminal, strongly vocationally biased courses have been made excessively academic and the vocational element in them has been considerably watered down with the result that these courses not only require as much intelligence as the more academic courses—Humanities and Science—but also provide totally inadequate training for entry into a vocation on leaving school.

In our considered opinion, therefore the most urgent reform needed in our Multipurpose schools is that they should be really Multipurpose or Comprehensive, broadly on the American pattern. And in order to live up to their name, they must provide a greater variety of diversified courses at different levels so as to cater for adolescents of varying abilities, aptitudes and vocational ambitions.

As we have pointed out in Chapter VIII courses at two, and possibly three different levels will be necessary if our Multipurpose schools are to be so in fact as well as in name. At the first level, will be courses such as the present Higher Secondary courses, essentially cultural and academic in the best sense of these terms, as is the case of the Humanities and Science courses, or, with a slight vocational bias, as in the case of the Technical or Home Science Courses. These A level courses will be specifically College-preparatory courses; they will be meant for a small intellectual elite, perhaps about 25-30% of the adolescents attending the average Multipurpose school, to prepare them for entry into the University and into Professional institutions of higher learning such as Engineering Colleges, Medical Colleges etc.

At the second B level will be a wide range of general education cum vocational training courses, patterned on the Junior Techni-

cal Course, in which there will be a correspondingly greater emphasis on the vocational element than is possible in the A level courses, and a correspondingly less emphasis on the general education, though this will by no means be neglected. Such Junior Technical courses should be not only in the technical field, but in Commerce, Home Science, Agriculture, and other specialised vocational fields. Their immediate aim will be to prepare for entry into a post-school training course, or apprenticeship in the chosen vocational field, or, in some cases into a job. Their overall objective will be to turn out boys and girls who will be skilled workers and, at the same time, good citizens and reasonably educated men and women. Such Junior "Technical" courses will demand a reasonable degree of intelligence, and will therefore cater for approximately another 25-30% of the 'second cream' of the adolescent population of the Multipurpose school.

The remaining 40-50% of the boys and girls in these schools will constitute the 'hard core' of the potential problem of wastage in these schools, and very special attention will have to be devoted to their needs and interests. The problem of these potential 'drop-outs' can only be solved in one or two ways. After Class VIII they can be diverted to specialised Trade, Industrial, Commercial schools or Training cum Production centres in which they will be given a minimum of general education and a maximum of training in a particular craft or vocation with the objective of making them skilled or semi-skilled craftsmen and women. Or a third range of C level, specifically vocational training courses, containing a substratum of general education must be provided in the Multipurpose schools themselves.

At present our Multipurpose schools are only "Multipurpose" in name, for, though they provide a minimum of three diversified courses, yet, in point of fact, because of the considerable 'core-curriculum' common to all courses, and the heavy, essentially academic syllabuses laid down, not only in the Humanities and Science but even in 'vocational' courses like Home Science and Technical they are really catering only for perhaps 30% at the outside of their pupils who are of above-average intelligence. Only if and when they provide alternative types of B and C level courses of the type outlined above will they be in a position to cater for the abilities, aptitudes and vocational ambitions of all



their pupils, and prepare them to earn a good living and to live a good life. And, only when they can do this, will they really be Multipurpose schools in the full sense of the term.

#### ORGANISATION AND ADMINISTRATION OF MULTIPURPOSE SCHOOLS

The attempt to cater successfully for the abilities, aptitudes and vocational ambitions not only for a small intellectual elite but of all the pupils in a Multipurpose school will be a formidable administrative task. Indeed, the nature and quality of the organisation and administration of the Multipurpose school will provide the key to its ultimate success or failure. Yet, it cannot be too strongly emphasised, administration is a means rather than an end, and when one is dealing with an infinite variety of adolescents, as the good Multipurpose school must endeavour to do, one must be careful not to make administration an end in itself in the interests of tidy uniformity and superficial efficiency. In short, a streamlined administrative machine in which the individual interests of staff and boys are sacrificed on the altar of efficiency and uniformity may not always be the most effective.

1. The ultimate objectives of Multipurpose education, as defined by the Mudaliar Commission, are complex and many sided. The basic problem of administration of a Multipurpose school will be now best to organise and utilise the available resources so as to achieve these objectives most effectively. In Chapter VII, we have outlined in some detail the material and human resources necessary to make a success of the Multipurpose school. We should like to re-emphasise here, with all the force at our command, that while material resources buildings equipment, furniture, teaching aids, curricula textbooks etc. are important, human resources are much more important. It is upon the Head and staff of the Multipurpose school, and upon these relationships with the other human partners in the Multipurpose scheme, (boys and girls parents and guardians, Schools Governors or Managing Committees, the Officers of the Inspectorate and the Directorate, and the public at large), that the success or failure of the Multipurpose school will ultimately depend. The Head and staff of these schools should therefore be chosen with very special care, provided with satisfactory salary scales and conditions of service,



and given the maximum degree of independence and support from the Inspectorate and the Directorate in the carrying out of their complex and exacting task. Moreover, since the successful working of the Multipurpose school will create many new problems and difficulties and call for acquisition of new knowledge and skills on the part of both Heads and staff, the Central and State Ministries of Education, through the Extension Service Departments of Training Colleges, must carry out a systematic programme of in-service education of the Heads and teachers of the Multipurpose schools so that they may be in a position to measure up to their difficult and exacting assignment. The Heads and Staff of the Multipurpose schools, in turn, must carry out a programme of enlightening the pupils and their parents concerning the implications of the Multipurpose school, its deficiencies and strengths, its dangers and advantages, so that they may win with their active co-operation for, unless there is a close and friendly and creative partnership between the various people who have a vested interest in the Multipurpose schools, the multipurpose experiment is not likely to be a real or lasting success.

2. In selecting High schools for upgrading into Higher Secondary Multipurpose schools, State Governments should make sure that certain basic minimum physical and material conditions are fulfilled.

(i) The High school should be well-sited, preferably away from crowded built up-areas, if it is in a town, and easy of access not only from the immediate neighbourhood but by means of public transport or school Buses from a catchment area of at least 3 miles. It should have adequate ground not only for any building extensions but also for playgrounds for major and minor games. Further, the area of the school grounds must be adequate not only for present needs but also for future expansion, for a Multipurpose school, if it is to provide the variety of courses we have envisaged for it to do justice to the majority of its pupils, will of necessity be a much larger school than an ordinary, Unilateral High school. The minimum school area of a good Multipurpose school should be at least five acres; we may have to make-do with less in large crowded towns, but a basic minimum of at least three acres should be insisted upon.



(ii) Existing buildings, and any building extensions which are necessary, should not be haphazardly planned and constructed. A Master-plan incorporating necessary improvements repairs and alterations to existing structures, and the addition of the new extensions should be drawn up, even though it may be implemented in stages over a period of years. Harmony between the old and the new, utility and flexibility and above all functionalism should be the keynotes of the Master plan which should be planned from the inside out, and not vice versa. The school buildings should provide adequate classroom and special room accommodation to achieve all the educational objectives of the Multipurpose school. The general classrooms should be large, bright, airy and well-ventilated, and a minimum of at least 10-15 sq. ft. of floor space should be provided for pupils. A number of special rooms are essential for the Multipurpose school to function effectively; among these are Science Laboratories cum Lecture rooms, a Library cum Reading room, a Geography cum History cum Social Studies room, a Multipurpose Assembly Hall and Film Projection Room cum Tiffin room and a Counsellor and Guidance room. All classroom and special rooms should be suitably furnished and equipped with the best moveable, functional furniture which can be put to many educational uses.

3. The Curriculum of Multipurpose school should be envisaged as a complex web of complementary classroom and extra classroom activities and experience blended into an integrated whole. The Time-table should reflect this unity in diversity by providing a balance between curricular and co-curricular activities and experiences which should be carefully co-ordinated and integrated with each other. In order to fit into the Time-Table everything that will be necessary and desirable to make the Multipurpose school a success, a lengthening of the school day and the initiation of a Day-Boarding system, such as we have described in Chapter VII will be highly desirable.

4. Finance will be a stumbling Block to the effective working of Multipurpose schools, especially those run by voluntary agencies — (and it is essential that the help of such agencies be actively sought, for they have been Pioneers in many sectors of the educational field)—unless the Central and State Governments provide adequate funds in the shape of generous recurring

and non recurring grants, especially in the form of Teaching Staff grants, to enable all Multipurpose schools, Governments and non-Government, to provide the staff, accommodation, and equipment essential for the successful working of the Multipurpose school.

5. The effective mobilisation and use of the vital human resources, which will spell either the success or failure on the Multipurpose school, will need the constant and enlightened attention of the powers-that-be:

(i) Since in our country, for good or for ill, all effective action tends to be intimated from the top and to filter downwards, the State Departments and Directorates of Education, under the leadership but not the domination of the Central Ministry of Education, will have to draw up detailed blueprints for the successful functioning of Multipurpose schools. In drawing up such blueprints, which should be based on carefully planned, pilot schemes of action research, they should enlist the active help of all those interested in the success of the Multipurpose experiment. Members of Managing Committees, Heads, Teachers, Parents, Children and the general public.

(ii) The officials of the Education Directorate should make a special effort to establish friendly and co-operative relationships with those who will be chiefly responsible not only in helping them to draw up suitable blueprints for action but of implementing them. In this task the main burden of responsibility will rest with the Inspectorate which forms a vital link between it and the school authorities, Heads, teachers, parents and guardians and the community at large. A carefully selected, well qualified and well paid Inspectorate, acting as the "eyes and ears" of the Education Department and as apostles of its progressive policies, will play a key role in the success or failure of the Multipurpose experiment.

(iii) At the level the individual school, the most urgent reform perhaps is for better, more public spirited and less interfering and politically motivated Managing Committees. Such Committees should be chiefly concerned with policy matters and former and leave the Heads and their staff free to regulate the internal life and working of the schools.

(iv) The Heads of the Multipurpose schools are the kingpins of the entire experiment, it is they who, in the ultimate analysis,



will make or mar their schools. Hence such Heads should be selected with special care, possess appropriate qualifications and qualities (these have been indicated in Chapter VII), and educated and trained in-service, through a planned series of lectures, seminars, workshops, and conferences organised by the Education Directorate and the Extension Services Departments of the post-graduate Training Colleges, to measure up to their difficult and exacting task. And, above all, they must be given the autonomy to regulate the internal life and discipline of the school to achieve his plans and objectives.

(v) The Head of a Multipurpose school in his turn should not be a petty dictator or endeavour to put on a One-man show. He is the captain of a team, and, through a course of in-service education and training in the form of a carefully planned and followed up series of staff meetings, Seminars and workshops, and guided reading he must weld his teachers into a real team, pulling together to achieve clearly defined, and freely accepted immediate, short-term and long term objectives and goals.

It goes without saying that of Heads and staff of suitable calibre and reason and qualifications are to be found and encouraged to give of their best to make the Multipurpose school a success their salaries and conditions of service will have to be considerably improved.

(vi) Efforts must also be made to establish healthy and friendly relationships between the Multipurpose schools and the parents and the community, for without these most of the good work done by the Multipurpose schools will be undone in the homes and in the community. Heads and teachers should, through Parent-teacher associations or other formal and informal contacts with parents, guardians and other members of the community, educate them about the implications of the Multipurpose school experiment with a view to winning their whole-hearted and enlightened co-operation without which the school will be able to accomplish very little.

(vii) Inside the Multipurpose schools themselves, the building up of a healthy relationship between the staff and the students is a *sine qua non* for the successful functioning of these institutions. This will only be possible if there is reasonably close and healthy contact between students and teachers, not only in the slightly



formal atmosphere of the classroom, but in the more informal and friendly atmosphere of the playing fields of co-curricular clubs and societies of various types and in the Canteen or Common rooms etc.

(viii) Discipline is essentially the forming of disciples who are motivated by love and respect rather than fear. It is this type of discipline, which alone can bring about self discipline on the part of the students, is to be nourished in Multipurpose schools, and it is an essential condition for their success, ways and means must be found to ensure that the individual child is not lost in the mass. This will be an ever present danger for, Multipurpose schools will have to be fairly large schools if they are to provide sufficiently varied staffing and facilities to cater for the individual needs of all the children attending them on the lines envisaged by us in this book. The establishment of a proper system of Class teachers who will be responsible, over and above the specialist teachers, for the all-round development and welfare of the students in the classes, and an adequate House System to cover not only classroom activities but also co-curricular activities should ensure that, if the Head cannot know intimately every boy and girl, they will at least be fairly well known to both their Class teachers and House Master or Mistress. Further an effective School Guidance Service, on the lines indicated later in this Chapter, will do much to cater for the individual needs and problems of every child, at least at certain critical periods of his life, and to build up healthy staff-students relationships.

#### THE MULTIPURPOSE SCHOOL CURRICULUM

The curriculum is fundamental to Multipurpose school reform. From all points of view, the present curriculum and syllabus improved for these school needs thorough reorganisation. The following concrete suggestions have been offered in the Chapter on 'The Multipurpose School Curriculum.'

1. The syllabus should not be a mere list of topics to be studied under different subjects heads. It should include all the activities (Curricular, Co-curricular, Guidance etc.) which are to be provided for the pupils during their school years. It should also contain suggestions about objectives of teaching different subjects,



methods of offering experience to pupils, and the manner of evaluating results. In short, it should be something like a Handbook of Suggestions for Teachers.

2. At least two broad types of courses should be provided by every Multipurpose school—One type should be College-preparatory and the other Vocation preparatory.

3. The College-preparatory courses should be framed on the basis of psychological evidence available in regard to the differential abilities and aptitudes in human beings. The number of such courses may be two or three per school.

4. Every Multipurpose school should also provide at least two courses on completion of which the pupils may directly enter various vocations. These courses should be framed in close and continuous consultation with the trades or the industries concerned.

5. This syllabi of the College-preparatory courses should be closely geared to the requirements for admission to higher courses for which they are supposed to prepare pupils.

6. The syllabi of the Core subjects should be completely overhauled. Physical education, art education, and moral and religious education should be included as new areas of experience.

7. At the same time, the total load of the Core subjects on the pupils should be substantially reduced. This can be done only by offering life-centred curricula for core subjects worked out in terms of projects. The possibility should be explored of framing a single integrated syllabus under the head "Everyday Life" to replace the syllabi for Social Studies, Mathematics, General Science, Craft Physical Education, and Moral and Religious Education.

8. The methods of teaching core-subjects should also be completely reoriented. Half of the syllabus should consist of practical work. New 'institutions' such as different kind of clubs (e.g. Social Studies and Hobbies Clubs) etc. will have to be developed for working out the syllabi of the core-subjects. The method of evaluation will also have to be different.

9. The syllabus of the elective subjects and the teaching of these subjects should be modified to allow scope for general education e.g. the study of Science subjects should include something of the history of Science, and biographies of great Scientists.

10. There should be specific directions in the Curriculum in regard to the minimum new 'institutions' to be developed in a school and the types of work to be undertaken by them in an academic year with a view to providing for the general education to pupils.

11. With regard to the study of languages, it has been suggested that, (from the academic point of view), the study of two languages, the Mother tongue and English is most desirable. If Hindi is to be studied as the 3rd language in the non-Hindi speaking States, the Hindi speaking states should take the study of one of the modern Indian languages.

#### METHODS OF TEACHING AND EVALUATION IN MULTIPURPOSE SCHOOLS

How we learn is not less important than what we learn. The Multipurpose school curriculum would not appear so unworkable if we followed modern methods of teaching. Teaching, in turn, cannot be separated from evaluation. The following concrete suggestions have been offered for improving existing methods of teaching and evaluation in Multipurpose Schools.

1. Lecture-methods which are principally methods of suggestion, cannot be effective, when the relationship between the teacher and the taught is unsatisfactory and when the teachers are not acquainted with the technique for offering suggestions.

2. Repetition is an inferior method of learning. Learning by this method cannot lead to transfer in learning.

3. The pupils should be made to learn through their own activities. The curriculum should be presented to them as assignments with sufficient hints for working them out. There should be adequate library and other facilities for the students. The classes should be conducted as group guidance activities to help the pupils in completing the assignments.

4. The work of the class should be based on the motivation of the pupils, as far as practicable. The organisation of the class work should also be in a democratic basis. The leadership of the pupils in the organisation of the class work should be fully utilised.



5. If taught according to group methods with the help of proper tools, a class of 40 pupils may be considered as the optimum.

6. The following are some of the tools required for successful teaching—(a) Handbook of Suggestions for teachers in which prescribed subjects syllabi may be worked out in terms of projects with hints for their organisation. (b) Pupils Work-books for every subjects. (c) Remedial readers for every subject. (d) Standardised ability tests. (e) Standardised Attainment Tests. (f) Diagnostic Attainment Tests. (g) Projected and non-projected visual materials. (h) Sociogram of the class.

These tools may be acquired or developed. In every State there should be specialist bodies to develop the tools.

7. The following are some of the institutions, which should be gradually developed in school to further curricular work—(a) An Auditorium cum Audiovisual room (b) A School Museum arranged subjectwise (c) An Exhibition Gallery, whose exhibits can be changed according to requirement (d) A central library cum workroom with branches (e.g. Class, subject, Hobby clubs etc.) (e) A Remedial Educational Centre for key subjects.

8. Deliberate efforts should be made to improve the teacher-pupil relationship. New institutions (e.g. Teacher-pupil Association) and types of social activities may be introduced in schools for the purpose.

9. Apart from teaching pupils specific subjects, special attention should be devoted in developing in them proper attitude towards studies, proper study habits, broad interests, the right values and the like.

10. Specific activities should be introduced in schools to develop them into co-operative educational communities.

11. It is necessary to do away with the distinction between Curricular and Co-curricular studies, so far as their demands on the school time-table are concerned. There should be a complete reorientation in our sense of priorities so far as the school activities are concerned.

12. Curriculum, methods of teaching and evaluation should be considered as integrally related. As such, the term evaluation should be substituted for examination to indicate our change of attitude towards the problem.

13. We should abandon the practice of basing our judgement on a single Evaluation, at the end of an educational grade or educational stage. Evaluation, even if it is external (e.g., Higher Secondary Examination), may be spread over the years of study. Staggering of evaluation should be considered desirable rather than undesirable — Evaluate, as you educate should be our guide.

14. Proper Cumulative Record Cards should be maintained in every school — These records should be taken into account in awarding the Higher Secondary School Certificate.

15. Internal evaluation should more and more take a diagnostic pattern.

16. Attempts should be made to improve the reliability and validity of evaluations by introducing short-answer and objective tests, and by using a shorter scale in evaluating easy type answers.

17. There should be a specialist body in every State which will co-operate with the External Examining Agency and the Schools in their efforts to reform examinations.

18. An Eight Point Programme of reform which can immediately be undertaken in the field of Higher Secondary Examination has been outlined.

19. A Seven Point Programme of reform of internal examination has also been outlined.

20. Evaluation of pupils should be more comprehensive — it should include development of interests, study habits, personality etc.

21. There should be a specially trained teacher in every school who may be considered as the Technical know-how of the school in the field of evaluation. Such a person may also act as the Teacher-Counsellor of the school.

#### F. GUIDANCE IN THE MULTIPURPOSE SCHOOL

An effective School Guidance Service is considered essential for the successful working of every Multipurpose school.

The following concrete steps have been suggested in Chapter X for ensuring its satisfactory functioning:

1. The public, including our administrators should be made aware of the true significance of the School Guidance movement, through the press, the radio and the cinema. The State Bureau



and the State Co-ordination Committees of Educational and Vocational Guidance, in co-operation with the State Publicity Departments, should have the responsibility of organising the work.

2. More intensive efforts should be made to train Headmasters, Educational administrators, and parents so that they may play their respective roles sincerely and effectively in organising the School Guidance Service. For the first two categories, systematic short Seminars should be organised by the State Bureau on the lines of the training courses for the Teacher-Counsellor, and Career-masters. Meetings of members of Parent-Teacher Associations (in units of not more than 40 parents) should be organised by every school in which the Teacher-Counsellor will function as the specialist.

3. It is necessary that guidance workers should themselves be specific in their mind about the objectives of the School Guidance Services and the activities to be undertaken to realise them. They should also be specific about the 'institutions' to be developed in schools for carrying on school guidance activities. For this purpose there should be a Standing Committee in every state consisting of the representatives of State Bureaux, State Directorate of National Employment Service, Heads of Multipurpose School, Teacher-Counsellors and Career-masters. The annual Conferences of the heads of the State-Bureau and the All India Association of Educational & Vocational Guidance, should also make contributions in the field.

4. State Education Directorates and State Boards of Secondary Education should send directives to the schools stating that the provision of an effective School Guidance Service is one of the conditions for the recognition of Multipurpose School. The directive should further state that the recognition granted to a school may be withdrawn in case its Guidance Service is not effective. The directive should also specifically lay down the 'institutions' to be developed and the types of activities of the schools. Time should be provided for them within the normal time-table of the school. The Teacher-Counsellor should be given proper facilities, including proper status and sufficient time for organising guidance activities in the school.

5. The State Education Department should provide a minimum sum of money, Capital and Recurring, for the effective running of a Guidance Service in every Multipurpose School.

6. Arrangements have to be made for the development of proper guidance tools. These should cover the following fields —

- (i) Mental measurement — both ability and attainments.
- (ii) Occupational information literature — suitable to both pupils and parents, Teacher-Counsellors and other teachers.
- (iii) Visual materials for group guidance work for the general public, pupils, parents etc. — both projected and non-projected.
- (iv) Necessary tests (diagnostic and remedial reading materials etc.) to help backward and maladjusted pupils in schools.

Preparation of these tools should be the direct responsibility of the State Bureaux but they should have the co-operation of the Directorates of National Employment Services through the State Co-ordination Committees for Educational and Vocational guidance. There should be some co-ordination in regard to the production of tools at the Central level, through a Central Co-ordination Committee for educational guidance.

7. The State Bureaux should run courses for the training of Career-masters and Teacher-Counsellors. They should also systematically conduct Seminars etc. for the training of Heads of Schools, Educational Administrators and Teachers of Multipurpose Schools. These courses and seminars etc. should be conducted in sufficient numbers so as to be able to satisfy the minimum needs of the State so far as these categories of guidance personnel are concerned.

8. Effective follow up of guidance work should be carried on in schools. State Directorates of Education or Boards of Secondary Education should be convinced that unless a school runs its guidance service with a minimum of efficiency, its recognition should be withdrawn.

The follow up work may be the responsibility of the State Bureau, but the Inspectorate shall have to fully co-operate with it.



9. The Staff of the State Bureaux and their other resources should be sufficiently strengthened, so that they may be able to share all these responsibilities. While thinking of staff, it should be noted that a State Bureau should function at least in three sections (the sections would not be water tight) Training, Tool production and follow up work.

10. This organisation of guidance work in every State should also be reviewed. The State Bureaux should function directly under the D.P.I. without being attached to Teacher Training Colleges, as is the case in certain States. The question of establishing Regional Bureaux to co-operate with the State Bureaux should also be seriously considered.

None of the above suggestions are difficult to carry out, if the authorities have conviction and earnestness. Together they constitute the basic essentials of an effective minimum School Guidance Service in a State.

In a Chapter on "Research in the Multipurpose School" in his book on "Aspects of Education in India and Abroad" one of the authors expressed the following view, with which his co-author in this present work is in full agreement.

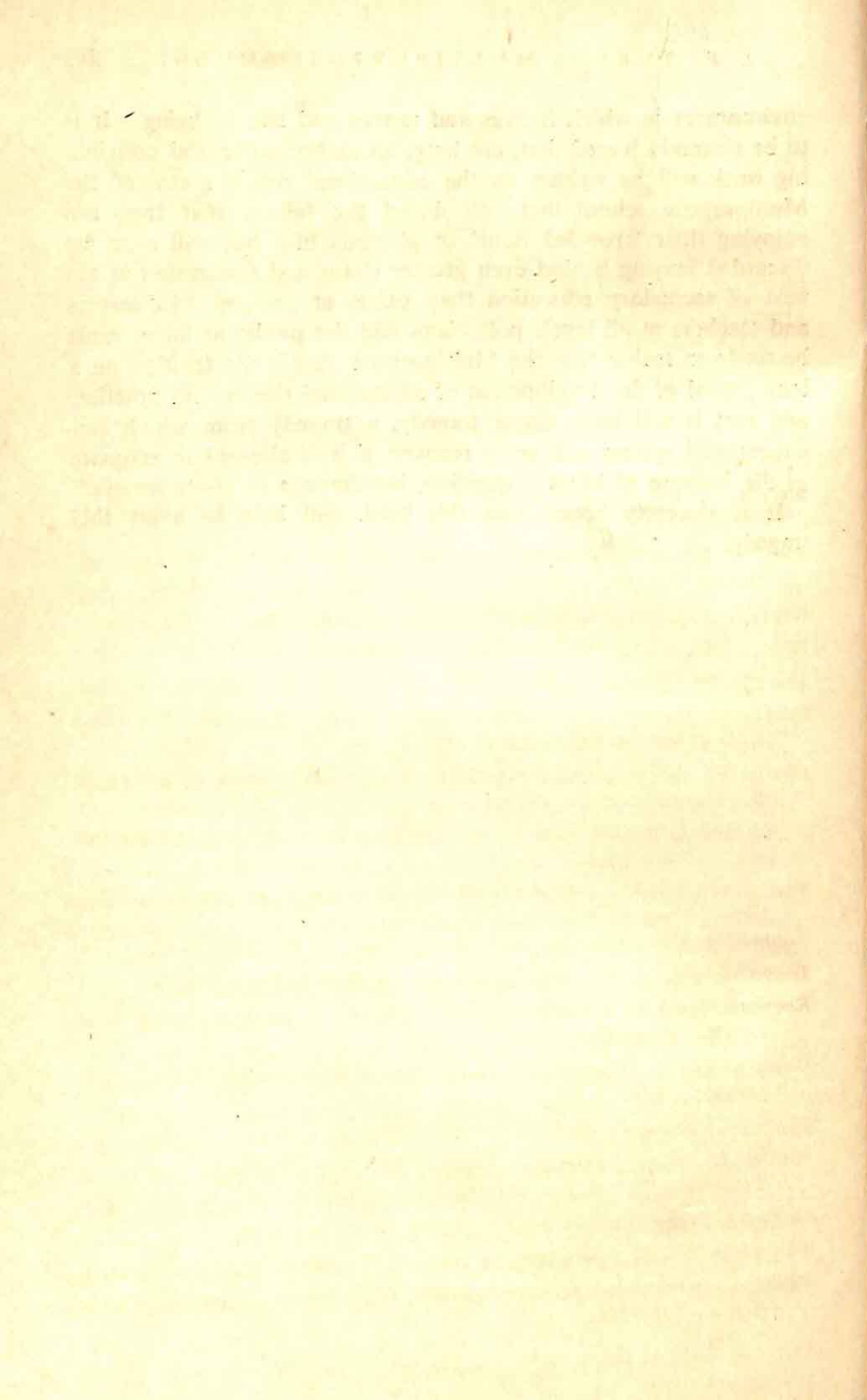
"The theory underlying general cum diversified Multipurpose secondary education is sound for the most part. But there is a definite and urgent need that the corpus of theory on which the Multipurpose school is founded should be developed, clarified, and systematised to convince the doubting Thomases, (and their name is legion in a tradition-rid country like ours!), that the Multipurpose idea is not a leap in the dark, or a mere passing fad, but that it is based on a sound educational and psychological foundation. The theoretical basis of Multipurpose education needs a much fuller and more complete and convincing exposition than is provided in the Mudaliar Report if the 'Creative minority' sponsoring it are to carry the 'uncreative mass' of the school administrators, heads, teachers, parents and the public at large with them.

Educational reform cannot function in a vacuum; unless a favourable climate of opinion is created both in the educational world itself, and in the wider world outside, the Multipurpose scheme is likely to be like a shooting star, which flashes brilliantly across the firmament, but soon burns itself out, due to the hostile

environment in which it lives and moves and has its being. It is to be sincerely hoped that, ere long, an authoritative and convincing work will be written on the educational *raison d'etre* of the Multipurpose school that will dispel the fallacy that they are enjoying their 'crowded hour' of glorious life, but will soon be discarded leaving behind even greater chaos and frustration in the field of secondary education than exists at present. Educators and teachers at all levels politicians and the public at large, must be made to realise that the Multipurpose idea is the fruition on a long period of the development of educational theory and practice, and that it will be a major tragedy, a tragedy from which our educational system will never recover, if it is allowed to stagnate or die because of blind opposition, indifference or sheer inertia."

It is sincerely hoped that this book will help to avert this tragedy.





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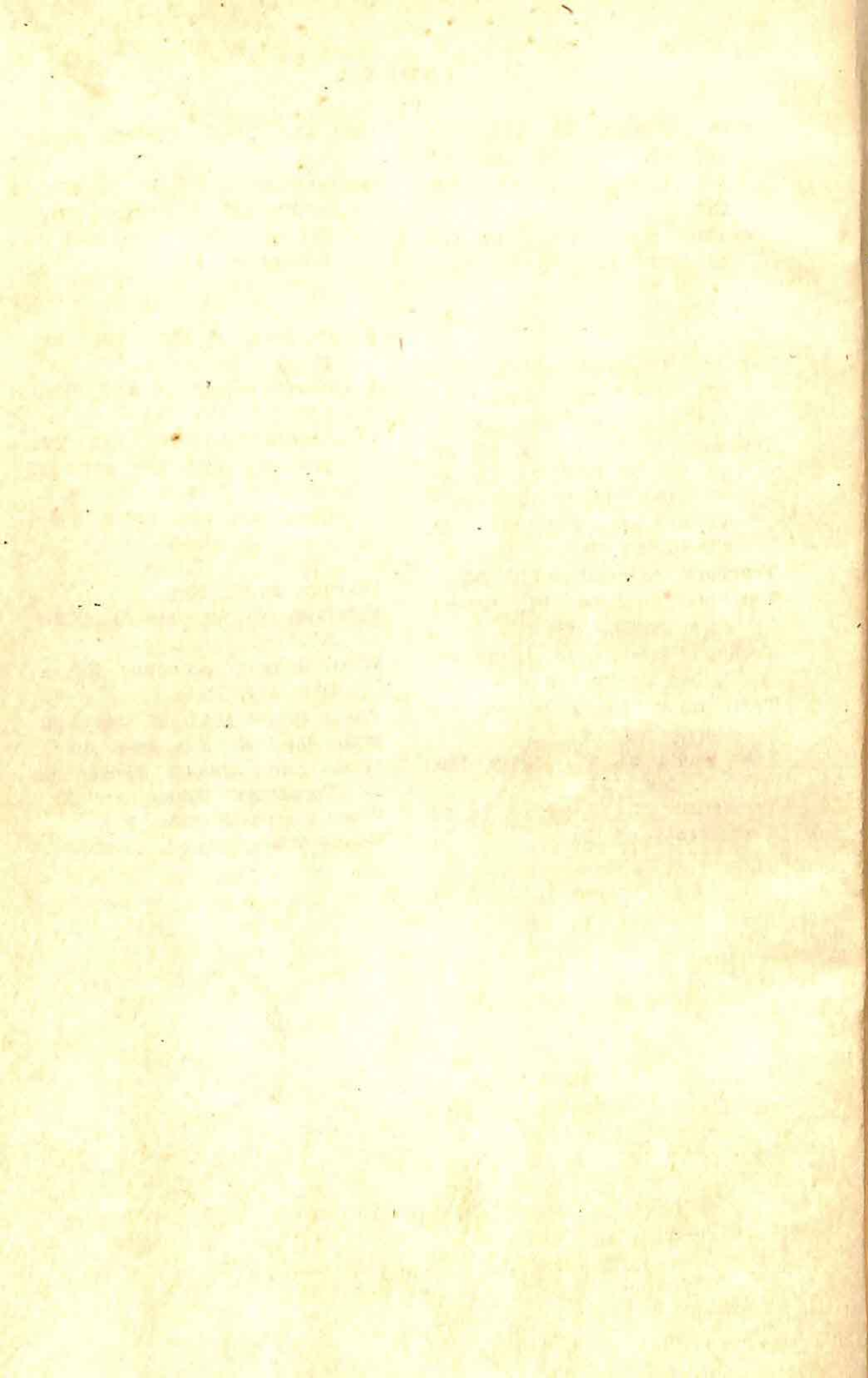


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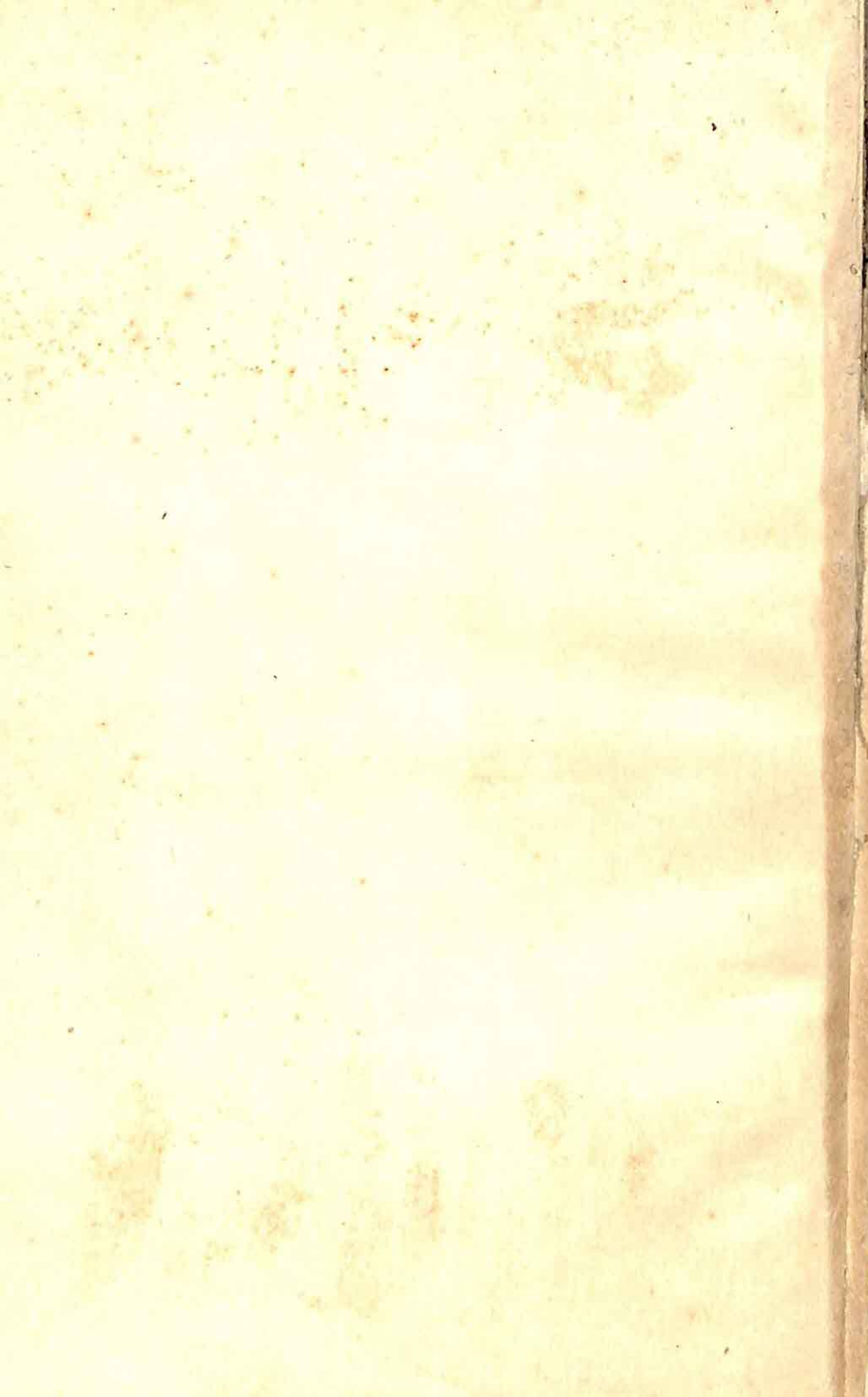


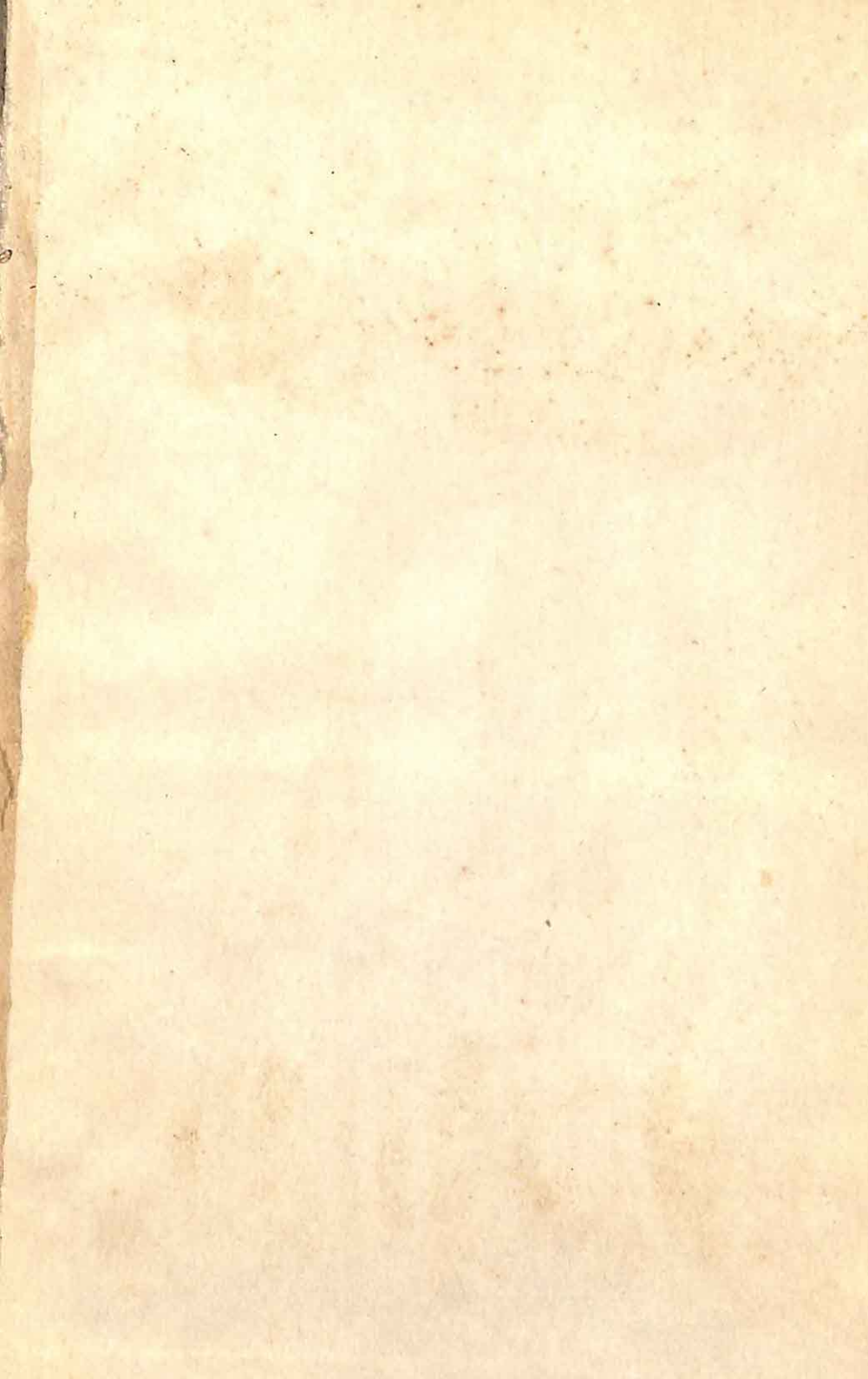














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